A SOCIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF SPIRITISM IN BRAZIL

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Dedicated to my professor of Missions and dear friend,

Arva C. Floyd,

through whom the Spirit led me to undertake this study.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The present study grew out of the attempt to know and understand
the Spiritist movement in Brazil, and to interpret it to new mission-
aries and other foreigners at the Escola de Português e Orientacao in
Campinas. It is my hope that the pages which follow reflect not only
the scholarly and objective effort to ascertain the place and signifi-
cance of this movement in Brazilian society, but also my unabashed
appreciation of and devotion to the people who compose that society.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This study is an analysis of the societal factors related to the existence and the vitality of Spiritism, a rapidly-growing religious movement in Brazil.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study are to describe the doctrinal, cultic, and social aspects of the phenomenon known as Spiritism in Brazil; to indicate the socio-cultural factors which have been associated with its beginning and its relatively rapid growth in recent decades; and to attempt to draw some conclusions as to its character as a socio-religious movement and its relationship to Brazilian society at large.

The Pertinence and Importance of the Study

The various societal and religious phenomena which are lumped together in the popular mind as "spiritism" figure among the major social forces in Brazil today.[1] That portion of them which is here under study is Kardec Spiritism. Nearly all of the elements which compose the spiritistic cults of Brazil, including the Kardecist, can be found in other societies. Nevertheless, the forms which they have assumed in Brazilian society, and the sheer numbers of their adherents within this large population, constitute a societal phenomenon of more than usual scientific and human interest.

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[1]The uses and the spellings of the word "spiritism" are explained in the section which follows.

Thus it is with a sense of urgency that this investigation has been undertaken. As far as the present writer is able to ascertain, no previous attempt has been made to bring together in one presentation an analysis of the nature, organization, and functioning of this social movement, its background, social setting, beliefs and practices, and social impact.

In this presentation of the cultural elements and societal factors which have given form and growth to the spiritist movement in Brazil, it will become apparent that we are dealing with some of the fundamental aspects of Brazilian civilization. We can hope that the analysis of this material will provide certain clues and guide-posts to what we may expect with regard to the further development of the cultural and societal patterns of this people. It is to be hoped further that this information, much of it presented here for the first time in English, and the conceptualization and analysis which are offered, may constitute an addition of some value to the sociological work of those upon whose efforts we build.

Scope of the Study

The scope of this study of Spiritism embraces the doctrinal content, the membership, and the organizational, ritual, and interactional aspects of the movement within itself, as well as its relationships with the wider Brazilian society. Not included, except by occasional reference, are other phenomena and movements which in a popular way come under the rubric of espiritismo, or spiritism. These consist principally of the Afro-Brazilian cults, and some of the features which distinguish them from Spiritism are given in the following section.

Although the description and analysis cover Spiritism in the entire country, major attention is focused upon the area of greatest Spiritist activity, the São Paulo-Rio de Janeiro "urban-industrial axis."

The time-period which is of greatest interest in the analysis of the data presented is confined to the years which have intervened since World War II. Certain sections, however, are devoted to the colonial period, and others to the latter half of the nineteenth century and the early years of the twentieth, for the provision of necessary background information.

The Nature and Types of Spiritism in Brazil

The particular movement which is our subject was founded in France a century ago. Its adherents insist that the designation "espiritismo," from a French neologism, "espiritisme," is correctly applied only with reference to their movement. As a means of achieving distinctions, and in deference to their denominational usage, we employ the spelling "Spiritism" -- with capital s -- in our references to this movement, even though, with the exception of proper names, few words are capitalized in Portuguese (as witness brasileiro, catolicismo, índio). Followers of Spiritism are known as espíritas, and here, too, we follow normal English usage and capitalize, alluding to them as Spiritists.

The term "spiritism" -- with lower-case s -- is employed not simply as a transliteration of the Portuguese expression "espiritismo," but because, as an English word in its own right, it gives more cogent expression to the reality it represents than does "spiritualism." Moreover, as will be evident throughout the course of this dissertation, "spiritism" in Brazilian usage refers to a much broader gamut of

phenomena than does the more common English term "spiritualism." The latter designation, however, will be employed occasionally with reference to the English and American movements which bear this name.

It is necessary at the outset to distinguish between spiritism and animism. This latter term is most commonly used in the study of religions to denote "the belief that all objects possess a natural life or vitality or are endowed with indwelling souls."[2] Although there is some question as to the place of animism in the religions of those who were brought from Africa to Brazil as slaves, and though its position in the religions of the Amerindians is more certain, the religions of modern Brazil are not animistic. The discussion of animism in Hastings' Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics includes "Spiritism" as a sub-heading; nevertheless, the impersonal spirit-beings referred to by the author are not encountered in the spirit-istic religions which exist in Brazil.[3]

In the article entitled "Spiritism," in the same work, as well as in popular thought, spiritism is considered with reference only to be the belief in communication with the spirits of the dead.[4] For many spiritists, however, including the Brazilian and other followers of

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[2]Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary, 7th ed., Springfield: G. C. Merriam and Co.

[3]Goblet d'Alviella, "Animism," in James Hastings, ed., Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, New York: Harper's, 1955, vol. I, pp. 535-537.

[4]F. C. S. Schiller, "Spiritism," in Hastings, op. cit., vol. XI, pp. 805-807.

Allan Kardec, belief in such communication exists only as a corollary to the more fundamental doctrine of reincarnation. The two principles of spirit communication and reincarnation are basic to the Brazilian expressions of spiritism, and give rise to their most distinctive feature, the mediumistic séance.

There are other spiritistic manifestations within Brazilian society, in addition to those which form the subject of this dissertation; some of them have also the character of socio-religious movements, and mention is made in this study of their relationships one to another. Among the Brazilian people as a whole, there is often a lack of precision as to the terminology used to refer to these movements. Rapid changes in them during the period since World War II have been to some extent responsible for this. It is common to hear the label "espiritismo" applied as a generic term with reference to all spiritistic phenomena. Therefore, when such a general meaning is intended in this study, the words "spiritism," "spiritist," et cetera, are employed.

For the sake of further clarification, we must mention several other terms which are in constant uncritical use by the people, and which frequently even reflect the lack of precise knowledge of the various spiritist and syncretic movements on the part of those not closely related to them. Most of this imprecision and confusion is in regard to the Afro-Brazilian cults, which are the product of the syncretism of the religions brought from Africa during three centuries of slave trading, with the Roman Catholic and Spiritistic religious expressions of the European components of the population.

The candomblés, located principally in Bahia, represent the persistence of the rites of the Yoruba-speaking Africans, although across

the years modifications and some syncretism with Roman Catholicism have taken place. The spiritual beings invoked in their ritual are deities, not spirits; also, these religions do not share the cosmology, theology, and general practices of the Spiritists.

Particularly in Rio de Janeiro and other coastal cities, other cults flourish in which the cosmologies and rites brought by the slaves have lost most or all their religious nature, and are devoted in large measure to the working of black magic. The most notorious of these are the macumbas of Rio de Janeiro, known also as quimbandas. Similar phenomena are called xangôs in Recife, catimbó and tambôr (with indigenous elements) in the vicinity of Fortaleza and São Luiz do Maranhão, and batuque in Pôrto Alegre in the far south. Although in most of these manifestations spiritistic elements have been appropriated only very crudely or not at all, they are popularly referred to as baixo espiritismo ("low spiritism").

Another cult commonly included in this category is that of Umbanda, for under casual observation it appears to be similar to the above-mentioned Afro-Brazilian rites. Nevertheless, Umbanda, referred to as "white magic" by its sympathizers, claims to be motivated by the virtue of Christian charity and to seek only to help those in need. The assiduous attempts on the part of the Spiritists to avoid being confused with low spiritism are noted at several points in the present study.

As was indicated above, the terminology of these movements is far from uniform in different sections of the country, and among social groups which stand in different relationships to these phenomena. For

example, the terms "macumba" and "umbanda" are frequently used inter-changeably in Rio de Janeiro. However, for the purposes of such a study as this, the terms as here used will be found acceptable by members and students of these various groups.

The Nature and Sources of the Data

A wide variety of sources have been used in securing the data for this dissertation. Among the more important of them are the following: (1) the official Brazilian censuses of population, which include information on religious affiliation; (2) figures on membership, congregations, and educational and social work in the official reports of federated spiritist bodies and their local organizations; (3) historico-cultural materials, focusing on the religious, philosophical, and cultural antecedents of the various racial, national, and cultural groups which have participated in the development of Spiritism; (4) life histories of Spiritist adherents and sympathizers, taken principally in interviews conducted personally by the writer; (5) information on the life of local and federated spiritist organizations collected by the writer in interviews with leaders and participants; (6) information on personal and social characteristics of spiritists and sympathizers obtained by means of questionnaires which the writer and assistants administered in spiritist meeting-places; (7) personal observation by the writer of the ritual, educational, charitable, and social practices of spiritists, in their homes, meeting-places, service institutions, shops of religious articles and books, and publishing enterprises; (8) the doctrinal and other publications of local and federated spiritist bodies.

Methods

The writer has participated in numerous Spiritist meetings: séances, doctrinal studies, social gatherings, and charity activities. He has had the opportunity of hearing local leaders discuss the financial and other problems involved in the operation of their centers and charitable institutions. He has visited the headquarters of state and national federations and talked with their officers.

He has also solicited, with varying degrees of success, copies of statistical reports, both from local centers and from county, state and national federations. Other reports, published in local Spiritist periodicals and in those of wider scope, have also been collected and used. Across the years, the writer has amassed a collection of Spiritist publications, as well as of clippings from newspapers and magazines which relate to Spiritist activities and frequently indicate aspects of the relationships of Spiritists to the general society.

As concerns information on the social and religious behavior of Spiritists, during fifteen years of residence in Brazil, the writer was personally acquainted with many adherents and sympathizers of the movement, and often discussed with them their practices and experiences. He also made a point of discussing with non-Spiritists who were close relatives or friends of Spiritist believers their own reasons for not following this movement.

Finally, several Spiritist centers, principally in Campinas, state of São Paulo, and Campo Grande, state of Mato Grosso, have been surveyed by the writer, with the use of individual questionnaires concerning the personal characteristics, as well as the activities of the Spiritists. A number of such interviews were in great depth and

detail. Similar material gathered by other researchers has also
been employed.

Order of Presentation

Immediately following this introduction, in which are presented
briefly the subject and nature of this study, the Review of the
Literature places this dissertation in the context of preceding in-
vestigation and thought. Following this, the religious development of
Brazil is traced broadly down to the advent and spread of Spiritism.

In succeeding chapters are delineated the distinguishing features
of Spiritism in Brazil: its doctrines and cults, its social features,
the specific roles of mediums and other adherents, and its total scope
as a movement within Brazilian society.

Next follows the presentation of historical aspects of Brazilian
life which were conducive to, or inhibitive of, the acceptance of
Spiritism as it entered the country in the nineteenth century. A
further chapter deals with the inter-play of various aspects of
twentieth-century social life with the growth and spread of the
Spiritist movement.

The final part is devoted to the conclusions which can be drawn
regarding the place and role of Spiritism in Brazilian life at the
present time, and conjectures as to future possibilities.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The purpose of this review is to indicate, first, the major cur-
rents in the development of the study of religion as an aspect of societal
life; second, the principal conceptual and other theoretical formula-
tions which are employed in this dissertation and which have contributed
to its frame of reference; and third, the studies of spiritism in
general, and those concerning its development in Brazil, which have
provided materials and concepts necessary to the carrying out of this
study.

The literature reviewed is presented in the following order:
general works on religion and society, from ancient times to the period
of the enlightenment; some representative works of the rationalists of
the enlightenment period; studies of religion by certain of the nine-
teenth-century evolutionary social philosophers; fundamental works of
the founders of modern sociology of religion; and works on religion in
Brazilian society, and on Spiritism.

General Works from Ancient Times to the Enlightenment

From the remotest times in recorded history, religion has occupied
an important place in historical, philosophical, and literary works.
Since religion constituted, or was reflected in, a large part of the
activities of most early societies, it is not surprising that many of
these writings, such as those of Herodotus, Euhemerus, and the Roman

historian Varro, dealt with origins and descriptions of the religions of their own and other peoples. Nor is it unnatural that much attention should have been given to religion as a means of social control. This latter interest is summed up in the following words of Cicero, who left several descriptions of Roman religious practice:

> In all probability the disappearance of piety
> toward the gods will entail the disappearance
> of loyalty and social union among men as well,
> and of justice itself, the queen of all virtues.[1]

The universal monotheism of the Old Testament religion brought with it the aspects of intolerance, polemic, and the high sense of collective vocation and discipline which are found in the prophetic writings.[2] The completed universalism in Christianity, within the cosmopolitan ambience of the Roman Empire, brought forth the patristic polemical writings against the nonChristian religions, particularly Manicheism and the Mithraic and other mystery cults. Clement of Alexandria, Cyprian, and Tertullian, in the second and third centuries, employed against the heathen the "euhemeristic" argument (first attributed to the Sicilian, Euhemerus, in his search for the origins of the gods) that their gods were mere men who had been apotheosized. In the century which followed, first Eusebius and later Augustine, while continuing the polemical task, showed deeper interest and insight into the social dimension of religion; this is seen particularly in Augustine's

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[1]Marcus Tullius Cicero, De Natura Deorum, Book I, trans. Hubert M. Poteat, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1950, p. 179.

[2]W. Robertson Smith, The Religion of the Semites, 3rd ed., New York: Macmillan Co., 1927.

The City of God, in which pagan Rome is seen as outside the sphere of Christian ethics.

Two thinkers of the thirteenth century characterize major streams of Christian thought in the Middle Ages. Thomas Aquinas, writing within a Chruch which was almost literally at one with the world which it ruled, took a different point of view from that of the embattled Augustine, as he united the Christian ethic with social life and polity. Roger Bacon, on the other hand, foreshadowed the scientific stance and the move away from the monistic view of society and religion. From data amassed by travelers and scholars, he produced the first European comparative history of religion; of special significance was his use of criteria other than those of the Church for determining what "true" religion was.[3] His major criterion was that of consensus, not of authoritarian pronouncement.

Representative Works from the Rationalists of the Enlightenment

The cultural relativism and rationalistic approach to religion of the period of the Enlightenment are well characterized by Lord Herbert of Cherbury's De veritate (1624) and Thomas Hobbes's Leviathan (1651). Herbert, in a deistic frame of reference, deduced five "universal" principles of religion. Hobbes, starting from the ancient premise that religion is based on fear, constructed a scheme of the origin and development of religion, in which -- although with gross errors of fact and interpretation -- he became one of the earliest

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[3]Annemarie de Waal Malefijt, Religion and Culture, New York: Macmillan, 1968, p. 25.

employers of ethnographic data as scientific evidence. These views and attitudes which increasingly saw all human activity, including the religious, as the object of scientific inquiry, came to a synthesis in the New Science (1725) of Giambattista Vico. Even this thinker, however, still exempted Judaism and Christianity from scientific investigation, as did many of his contemporaries, such as J. F. Lafitau (Moeurs des sauvages amériquains comparées aux moeurs des premiers temps, 1724).

But there were even men of the Church in the Middle Ages, who saw religion principally as a means of social control. Marsilius of Padua (1275-1343) saw religious belief as having only the function of moral restraint upon the ignorant masses. This view was later adopted by the practical Machiavelli (1469-1527) and by such vociferous foes of Christianity as Voltaire (Essay on the Manners and Spirit of Nations, 1756).

Nineteenth Century Evolutionary Studies of Religion

It remained for the great synthesizers of the nineteenth century, particularly Auguste Comte, (The Positive Philosophy, 1830-1842), Edward Burnett Tylor (Primitive Culture, 1872), and Herbert Spencer (Principles of Sociology, 1876-1896), to attempt to place religion within a scientific view of the whole of knowledge. However, "there can be little doubt that the modern comparative study of religions began with Max Muller...,"[4] with the publication in 1856 of Comparative

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[4]Joachim Wach, The Comparative Study of Religions, New York: Columbia University Press, 1961, p. 3.

Mythology, followed later by The Introduction to the Science of
Religions (1870) and The Origin and Growth of Religion as Illustrated
by the Religions of India (1878), as well as other works in a similar
vein.

These writers, like many before and after them, sought the nature
of religion in its origins. Being committed to an evolutionary view
of Nature and of human existence, belonging as they did to the European
culture which was sweeping over the "primitive" world, and with their
conviction of the rational nature of man, they assumed that primitive
man evolved his beliefs through rational reaction to the phenomena
which life presented to him. The study of religions, freed from
theological systems, and supposedly freed from metaphysical ties, was
characterized in this period by the search for origins, for cultural
parallels, and for evolutionary stages.

Muller crowned a long and prodigiously productive career with the
opening of his rich mine of materials for comparison, the many volumes
of The Sacred Books of the East (began publication 1897). By this time
also the nature, origin, and history of religions were beginning to be
studied in the light of the observation of the religious behavior of
primitive, Oriental, and other non-European peoples. Tylor used
ethnographic data, but, like the great mass of material gathered by
James G. Frazer and published as The Golden Bough (1890-1915), much of
it was collected by untrained observers and was incomplete, unreliable;
moreover, it was not placed within its proper temporal and cultural
contexts. These writers presented rationalistic explanations of the
origins of religion, generally attributing to primitive man deductive

processes of reasoning, by which he arrived at belief in the soul and spirits (Tylor) and came to differentiate between magic and religion (Frazer).

P. A. Sorokin has observed that, "The theory that belief, especially a magical or religious belief, is the most efficient factor in human destiny is possibly the oldest form of social theory."[5] Most of the writers mentioned thus far subscribed in some measure to this theory; Auguste Comte based his whole system upon it.

Fustel de Coulanges, in The Ancient City, (1864, English trans., 1900) wielded a great influence upon succeeding students of societal life, not least among them Émile Durkheim. His major insistence was upon the place of ideas in general, and religious beliefs in particular, as the major determinant of social phenomena. The principal contributions of Fustel de Coulanges were, first, his perception of religion as an integral element of societal life which was not to be dismissed because of possible humble or even illusory origins, and, second, the development of a structural view of religion in relation to the other societal institutions; their forms were felt to be determined, to a large extent, by religious factors.

W. Robertson Smith was among the first of the churchmen-scholars to give major attention to the social factors which conditioned the development of religion among primitive peoples; his Religion of the Semites (1889), although based on the most tenuous evidence, was of a

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[5] P. A. Sorokin, Contemporary Sociological Theories, New York: Harper & Row, Torchbook Edition, 1964, p. 622.

piece with the evolutionary, totemistic views of primitive religion of his time, and, as Evans-Pritchard has observed, "misled both Durkheim and Freud."[6] His work was instrumental in breaking down the fears of many churchmen concerning the objective study of the observable phenomena of religion. Even so, publication of his views cost him his position at the University of Aberdeen, for it was felt that he humanized Old Testament religion, substituting social determinism for the awesome compulsion of the"holy," as found in prophetic Hebrew religion.

Modern Sociology of Religion: Durkheim, Weber, and Others

Emile Durkheim's Elementary Forms of the Religious Life (1912) represents the first major effort to form a theory of the relation of religion and society on the basis of empirical evidence; the data employed were those of Spencer and Gillen and others from their studies of the Australian aborigines. The well-known criticisms of this work have been admirably summarized by Sorokin and by Evans-Pritchard:[7] inadequacy of the data and its erroneousness; unjustified reading into the data of behavior which is unknown; generalization on the basis of isolated, atypical cases; and the ultimate founding of the"social fact" upon a psychological process.

Nevertheless, it was Durkheim who set the stage for most of the subsequent positivistic study of religion: it was established as a universal element of social life, and as being universally social in its

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[6]E. E. Evans-Pritchard, Theories of Primitive Religion, London: Oxford University Press, 1965, p. 52.

[7]P. A. Sorokin, op. cit., pp. 452-463, 476-480, and E. E. Evans-Pritchard, op. cit., pp. 54-74.

manifestations; it was seen as dividing the life of man into two sectors, the sacred and the profane. It is on this stage that have been developed the variations of the functionalist view of religion, which has been stated succinctly as follows:

> ...that the religious institutions of a society represent, and elicit acceptance of, certain central values whose internalization by members of the society is necessary for the adequate integration of that society's various parts.[8]

Here the point of reference is society, and the distinctions between profane and sacred are psychological, involving attitudes toward various facets of societal life, not toward the supernatural.

The supernatural had generally been thought of in terms of personal power. In 1891, the concept of impersonal supernatural powers, called mana by the Melanesians, was presented to the scholarly world by a missionary, R. H. Codrington.[9] Although the concept has been useful in expressing the primitive view of the world and its processes as having a supernatural foundation, it has produced confusion for three reasons. First, it contributed further to the fruitless quest for a primordial "origin" of religion. Second, it was immediately equated by anthropologists with similar concepts of other peoples, such as orenda, wakan, manitou (American Indian), and even the classic el, dynamis, and numen, despite the fact that these terms are far from interchangeable.

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[8]Anthony F. C. Wallace, Religion: An Anthropological View, New York: Random House, 1966, p. 25.

[9]R. H. Codrington, The Melanesians: Studies in Their Anthropology and Folklore, Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1891.

Third, it does not refer, in Melanesian usage, to impersonal force alone, but is intimately and necessarily connected, in many cases, to spirits and persons, and to their control of it.[10] Mana can thus have two manifestations: personal and purposive, on the one hand; impersonal, as an imparted force, on the other.

This distinction is important since a fundamental aspect of religious behavior is its personal, relational, nature. When it is employed in this sense, the concept of mana includes the genuinely religious attitude of awe, similar to that experienced in the confrontation with the holy. It is directed to that which transcends the human, and in this way differs from Durkheim's idea of the sacred.

Although Durkheim erred in making the worshipping subject -- society -- into its own object of veneration, his noteworthy contribution to the sociological study of religion was his combining of the perception of the universally communal nature of religion with the recognition of the distinctive character of the sacred and the corollary concept of awe as the posture of the worshipping group.

This transcendental, "awe-full" aspect has been insisted upon by other investigators.

> Holiness is the great work in religion; it is even
> more essential than the notion of God. Real religion
> may exist without a definite conception of divinity,

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[10]Among the Polynesians, a central function of mana was related to the maintenance of the social hierarchy and the control by the upper classes. (Thomas F. Hoult, The Sociology of Religion, New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1958, p. 280.)

> but there is no real religion without a distinction
> between holy and profane...The only sure test is
> holiness.[11]

This was firmly established among modern scholars of religion by the work of Rudolph Otto, principally in The Idea of the Holy (1917), with its theme, "Religion is the experience of the Holy." Religion is seen as an encounter, with an objective basis, the subjective experience of which is a combination of awe before the mysterium tremendum and attraction to the mysterium fascinans.

Paul Tillich, in reminding us that religion is not one human function among others, but rather "the dimension of depth in all of them," goes on to ask: "What does the metaphor depth mean? It means that the religious aspect points to that which is ultimate, infinite, unconditional in man's spiritual life."[12] This is the source of the consciousness of sin and unworthiness; of exaltation, joy, and praise; and of power and sacrificial devotion, as these are conceived with a transcendental reference.

Such a conceptualization as that provided by the authors just cited aids us in the avoidance of facile psychologism and of the once-fashionable evolutionism which seeks religious origins, and which finds them in "primitive" manifestations. It also guards against Durkheim's subjectivist error in the deification of the group. Söderblom, in the

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[11]Friedrich Schleiermacher, cited by Nathan Söderblom, in "Holiness," in James Hastings, ed., Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, New York: Harper's, 1955, vol. VI, p. 731.

[12]Paul Tillich, Theology of Culture, New York: Oxford University Press, 1964, p. 7.

above-cited article, is correct in rejecting Durkheim's "objectifying and idealizing the community" as the source of sanctity, for it has led many anthropologists and sociologists into subjective definitions of religion. A typical case is that of Hoult, who defines religion, "functionally, [as] that aspect of culture which is concerned with the sanctification of particular beliefs and behavior patterns."[13] Thus religion is simply equated with ideology. When such identification occurs empirically, it is because of the loss of the objective, "holy" dimension peculiar and necessary to religion. In such a case, we will find a fruitful field for sociological study, or perhaps a pertinent object for the trumpetings of a Marx or a Mannheim, but we do not have a normative example of religion. We deal in this study with some such cases, as is indicated in subsequent sections.

Durkheim had sought the function of religion in the maintenance of social solidarity. Max Weber, asking the question as to the part played by religion in bringing about social change, created the first systematic sociology of religion. In The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism (1905) Weber showed, as Evans-Pritchard cautiously puts it, "that doctrines may create an ethos conducive to secular developments."[14] Through the elaboration of his ideal types of societies and of religious expression and economic activity, and through his empathetic interpretive method, Weber examined the influence of the

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[13]Hoult, op. cit., p. 30.

[14]op. cit., p. 118.

religious systems upon economic practice in the great ancient socie-
ties of Asia and Europe (<u>The Sociology of Religion</u>, 1922 and
<u>Gesammelte Aufsätze zur Religionssociologie</u>, begun 1911).

Another important product of Weber's typological method is the
church-sect conceptualization developed by him and expanded by Ernst
Troeltsch (<u>Social Teaching of the Christian Churches</u>, 1931 and
<u>Gesammelte Schriften</u>, vols. 3 and 4, 1922-1925). Such typologies have
been further developed by Howard Becker (<u>Through Values to Social
Interpretation</u>, 1950), H. Richard Niebuhr (<u>The Social Sources of
Denominationalism</u>, 1940), and, with less imagination, by many others.

Weber's work on the place of religion in society was only one
aspect of his attempt, on the basis of historical and current statis-
tical evidence, to comprehend the interrelationships of the various
societal institutions. It was on the basis of his conceptualization
that Joachim Wach later developed his frame of reference for the
sociological and comparative study of religions, as found in the
following works: <u>Einführung in die Religionssociologie</u> (1931),
translated as <u>Sociology of Religion</u> (1944); <u>Types of Religious Ex-
perience: Christian and Non-Christian</u> (1951); and <u>Comparative Study
of Religions</u> (1958). It is this frame of reference which is em-
ployed in the present study, for the description of Spiritism and
other religious phenomena of Brazil and their relations to Brazilian
society.

According to the conceptualization of Wach which forms the frame-
work for our observations of religious groups in Brazil, each group
is examined first as a religious system with three forms of expression:

first, that of doctrine and belief; second, that of the cultus, including rituals and training; and third, that of the fellowship, or common life of the group. A distinction is drawn between religious groupings which follow natural social divisions (family, nation, et cetera), and those formed specifically on the basis of religious affiliation, not necessarily coextensive with natural groups. Wach has enlarged upon Weber's threefold typology of leadership: charismatic, traditional, and rational. These types are treated in relationship to the above-mentioned character of the group as·natural or specifically religious, and to the consequent nature of the relationship of the group to its environing society; the relationship of the religious group to the society is also classified in Weberian terms, as naively positive, critically positive, and negative.

The Literature Concerning Spiritualism

In 1848 -- a fateful year for Europe and America in politics, science, and philosophy -- in an obscure burg called Hydesville, New York, the teen-aged Fox sisters, Margaret and Katie, began to receive what they termed"messages from the spirits" through the rappings of tables that moved. Modern spiritualism was launched, and it swept across the two continents, as a half-serious parlor game, a form of theatrical mystification, and often as a new straw of hope for the bereaved and the fearful of death.

Moreover, few phenomena could have been better calculated to excite the interest of many who, enthralled by the scientism of the age, yearned uneasily to compensate for the transcendentalism of which their view of science had robbed them. The article "Spiritisme," in

vol. XXX of La Grande Encyclopedie (n.d.) tells of the interest in the phenomena on the part of thousands of Americans, and of the spread of spiritualism to England, where it has been the subject of more intense and serious inquiry. F. C. S. Schiller in his article in the Encyclopedia of Religion and Ethics, vol. 11, entitled "Spiritism," observes that "The literature of the subject is immense, but much of it is of very little value"; he notes that it was with the founding in 1882 of the Society for Psychical Research, by respected scholars, that a source of reliable literature on·psychic phenomena was established.

The findings "in favor" of spiritualism by well-known scientists of the period include those of Oliver Lodge, F. W. H. Myers, Richard Hodgson, and -- most widely employed in the arguments of the spiritual- ists -- the physicist William Crookes, whose exhaustive experiments are recorded in Researches in the Phenomena of Spiritualism (1874). Others, including colleagues of those mentioned above, have failed to be con- vinced of spiritual explanations of the phenomena; representative of these are Andrew Lang, The Making of Religion (1898); F. Podmore, Phantasms of the Living (1886); and William James, The Will to Believe (1897) and Memories and Studies (1911). Whether the phenomena be designated "spiritualism," as in Europe and America, or (with modifica- tions) "spiritism" in Brazil, so called "scientific proof" appears to have been accepted, up to the present time, principally by those who already believed in the spirit nature of the occurrences.

In this century, investigations of mediumistic occurrences led the French psychologist, Charles Richet, into the study of what he labeled "metapsychics." His studies of mediumistic activities,

corresponding in a general way to those of J. B. Rhine on extra-sensory perception, came to conclusions ranging from exposition of fraud in some cases to suspension of judgment as to cause in others. They were reported in Traité de Metapsychique (1923).

Works Which Delineate the Religious Situation in Brazil

Thales de Azevedo, noted social anthropologist, observed in the opening sentences of his brief O Catolicismo no Brasil that, except for the sizeable amount of study devoted to indigenous and Afro-Brazilian cults, little scientific investigation of religion had been undertaken in Brazil. This still largely is true. Most writings on the subject have been impressionist, and have added little to what had been noted more than a century ago by the observant travelers Daniel P. Kidder and J. C. Fletcher in Brazil and the Brazilians (1857). These writers called attention to the relative indifference of the Brazilian to theological orthodoxy, his pragmatic view of religion, and the resulting tendencies to religious tolerance and syncretism.

Social scientists who have summarized the religious situation in the country under study are Roger Bastide, with "Religion and the Church in Brazil," in T. Lynn Smith and Alexander Marchant, Brazil: Portrait of Half a Continent (1951); T. Lynn Smith, in Brazil: People and Institutions (3rd ed., 1963); Charles Wagley, in his Introduction to Brazil (1963); and Emilio Willems, chapter "Brazil," in Arnold M. Rose, ed., The Institutions of Advanced Societies (1958).

Religion has been treated with regard to its role in local communities in such studies as the following: Charles Wagley, Race and Class in Rural Brazil (1952) and Amazon Town (1953); Marvin Harris,

Town and Country in Brazil (1956); and Oracy Nogueira, Família e Comunidade: Um Estudo Sociológico de Itapetininga, São Paulo (1962).

Emilio Willems has done much to contribute to the understanding of the proliferation of non-Catholic religions throughout Brazil. His major contributions are: appropriate sections in Uma Vila Brasileira (1961); "Religious Mass Movements and Social Change in Brazil," chapter in Eric N. Baklanoff, ed., New Perspectives in Brazil (1966); and Followers of the New Faith: Culture Change and the Rise of Protestantism in Brazil and Chile (1967). This latter work deals principally with the evangelical groups called "Pentecostals," and their rapid growth. The same movement is described from a Protestant point-of-view in William R. Read, New Patterns of Church Growth in Brazil (1965). Further insight is given into the dynamics of Protestantism on the local level in John V. D. Saunders, "Organização Social de uma Congregação Protestante no Estado de Guanabara, Brasil," Sociologia, XIII (1960).

As deep and rapid changes appear to be underway within the Roman Catholic Church in Brazil, Thales de Azevedo has worked toward the development of more adequate conceptualization for the study of changes in church structure and religious behavior. Recent important writings of this anthropologist are the article on Brazil in "Church and State in Latin America," New Catholic Encyclopedia (1967) and "Catolicismo no Brasil?", Vozes (Petrópolis, Brazil) Ano 63, no. 2 (Fevereiro de 1969). He is accompanied by Roman Catholic clerics in this task: Fr. Jose Comblin, O Catolicismo no Brasil (1955); A. Gregory, A Igreja no Brasil (1965); and Fr. M. Schooyans, O Desafio da Secularização (1968).

Works Related to Spiritism as a Social Phenomenon in Brazil

Although the Spiritist movement itself had been relatively pro-
lific in the publication of its doctrinal works, nevertheless, sur-
prisingly little has been published concerning this important develop-
ment in the life of the Brazilian nation. Furthermore, most of what
has been produced falls into two categories: superficial, popularized
journalism on the one hand, and partisan -- often polemical -- writing
on the other.

There are, however, several works, which in spite of their
partisan character give helpful substantive presentations concerning
Spiritism, and in which information and opinion can be distinguished
with relative ease. Among these is Júlio Andrade Ferreira's O
Espiritismo, uma Avaliação (1959); Rev. Ferreira is a Presbyterian
church historian and seminary professor. Representing the view of the
Roman Catholic hierarchy are two works by the foremost Roman Catholic
doctrinal apologist in Brazil, Friar Boaventura Kloppenburg: O Espiri-
tismo no Brasil (1960) and O Reincarnacionismo no Brasil (1961).
Leonídio Ribeiro and Murillo de Campos, former practitioners of legal
medicine with the police department of Rio de Janeiro, present a study
of the literature and of their own experiences concerning the rela-
tionship of spiritistic practices to the incidence of insanity and
crime, in O Espiritismo no Brasil, Contribuição ao Seu Estudo Clínico e
Médico-Legal (1931). Unfortunately, the work is prejudiced by its
polemical tone and its frequent failure to distinguish between charlatans
and serious Spiritists, and between these latter and the adherents of
Afro-Brazilian cults.

Prof. Candido Procópio Ferreira Camargo, of the Escola de Sociologia e Politica de São Paulo, is outstanding among the few who are engaged in the sociological study of Brazilian Spiritism. He presents a functional analysis of Spiritism, based upon investigations in the city of São Paulo and other urban areas in the state of São Paulo, in a brief work called Kardecismo e Umbanda (1961). The study, which includes both Spiritism and the Afro-Brazilian movement known as Umbanda, was done in cooperation with the Fédération Internationale des Instituts de Recherches, under the auspices of the Roman Catholic Church, and the material was also published by the Fédération with adaptations on changes of organization, as Aspectos Sociológicos del Espiritismo en São Paulo (1961). The thesis of this psycho-sociological study is that Spiritism and Umbanda are functional in the adaptation and integration of people in the modern urban society of Sao Paulo, with its changing values.

An informative general article, "Spiritism in Brazil," by Donald Warren, Jr., has recently appeared in the Journal of Inter-American Studies (July, 1968).

CHAPTER III

RELIGION IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF BRAZILIAN SOCIETY

In view of the fact that the subject of this study is a re-
ligious movement, it seems essential for us to trace briefly the
major religious forces and the roles they played in the development
of Brazilian civilization from early colonial times to the end of the
nineteenth century. The most influential of these was Roman Catholi-
cism, and we first focus upon its role in the formation of the
society of the Portuguese colonizers and that of their Brazilian de-
scendants. As we set the scene for the entrance of Spiritism, it is
also necessary to note the religious contributions of the Indians
and the African slaves. Also, within the context of the development
of a plurality of religions in Brazil, we consider the Protestant
expressions of colonists and missionaries. Finally, we indicate
the presence and influence of certain non-religious movements.

The material surveyed here is not new; but it is hoped that it
acquires a new significance when related to the rise and spread of
Spiritism in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Some of the
relationships between Spiritism and certain elements of the religious
situation are fairly direct. For example, they involve commonality or
similarity of beliefs or practices. Some others, although less direct,
are more basic. They have to do with the forces which have pro-
duced societal conditions conducive to the introduction and ac-
ceptance of a religious alternative such as Spiritism. In this

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respect, the relationships which prevailed among institutions such as the Church, the plantation, and the family are particularly important. Since we are dealing with the rise of a new, sectarian religion in competition with a traditional, universal one, some of the relationships are inverse. Although we hesitate to assert cause-effect relationships, the recognition of certain associations and even patterns of socio-religious phenomena, involved in the rise of Spiritism, seems unavoidable.

Roman Catholic Institutions in the Formation of Brazilian Society

In his historical presentation of Brazilian culture, Fernando de Azevedo takes "Religious Institutions and Beliefs" as his point of departure. This is in keeping with Brazilian sentiment as a whole. Indeed, the first picture in many elementary school texts and other children's books is that of the First Mass said on the land that was baptized "Ilha de Vera Cruz" (the Island of the True Cross), later called Brazil and Land of the Holy Cross. Azevedo quotes Father Serafim Leite's dictum that "Brazil was born Christian," and goes on to describe the great cross of native wood before which the mass was said as "the august symbol of the conquest of the newly discovered lands for Christian civilization."[1]

This social historian goes to great lengths in his quasi-identification of Brazilian culture with the finest flowers and

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[1] Fernando de Azevedo, Brazilian Culture, trans. William Rex Crawford, New York: Macmillan, 1950, p. 140.

fruits of Christianity, declaring that the influence was "without doubt preponderant and practically exclusive in the defining of the culture."[2] In a similar vein, Gilberto Freyre finds great significance in the place of the Cross on the Portuguese coat-of-arms, and goes on to assert: "No other European dedicated himself to conquests giving such emphasis to the missionary aspect of his conquering and colonizing effort."[3]

Such sentiments place too great a burden of cultural explanation upon a single element. They are hardly congruent with the theory which Freyre himself has made fundamental to all Brazilian studies, and which is outlined in the dwelling-symbolism employed in the titles of his major works: Big House and slave-quarters, and Mansions and shanties. On the one hand, these dwellings stand for the master's fondness for material wealth, political power and personal assertion, a love which is often strangely and beautifully mixed with religious tradition and devotion. On the other hand, they are symbols of the slave's debasement and servility of a deep personal loyalty to the master, and of the intermingling of varied religious practices for protection, comfort, and social solidarity. The Portuguese religious tradition was neither idyllic, nor was it an isolated element in the formation of the Brazilian people and their development up to the time of the advent and growth of Spiritism.

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[2]Ibid., p. 139.

[3]Gilberto Freyre, A Propósito de Frades, Salvador: Livraria Progresso Editôra, 1959, p. 166.

Far more realistic are those appraisals which give due importance, in the motivations and the dynamic for the colonization of Brazil, to the place of the great social changes and the opportunities for economic advancement and social mobility which accompanied them.[4] It is generally recognized that times of great social upheaval are characterized by extremes of religious expression; there is wide-spread disbelief, but mysticism and religious fervor also increase. This occurred in Portugal at the close of the Middle Ages. The increase in such extremes of apostasy on the one hand, and religious commitment on the other, was related positively to imperial expansion and its con- comitant political and social instability; these forces had far greater impact than that of the Lisbon earthquake centuries later.

We now examine the major features of the socio-religious back- grounds of the various elements of Brazilian colonial society.

Religious Background of the Portuguese Colonizer

Portuguese piety was far more personal than proselyting, less identified with the spread of the Kingdom of God than with the ex- pansion and protection of the believer's own soul. The total life of the Portuguese was vividly colored by religiosity. Antonio H. Oliveira Marques, who has pictured in rich detail the day-to-day existence of the medieval Portuguese, indicates that:

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[4]Cf. J. F. Almeida Prado, Primeiros Povoadores do Brasil: 1500-1530, São Paulo: Companhia Editora Nacional, 1939, pp. 12-18; cf. also F. J. Oliveira Vianna, Evolução do Povo Brasileiro, São Paulo: Monteiro Lobato e Cia. Editores, n.d., pp. 50-52, 58.

> All of daily life, from birth to the tomb, unrolled
> under the sign [of religion]. This faith was not of
> the most vital, nor was the belief in God of the
> deepest kind. The fact is that at that time there
> were fewer means of explaining the subordination of
> life to supernatural powers....Religion imposed it-
> self upon men more in those times, because it was
> more necessary.[6]

Oliveira Marques goes on to indicate the multiplicity of acts in

which the holy, or the sacred, was brought to bear upon the every-day,

or profane, as in the blessing of a newly-built house, a freshly dug

well, or the first-fruits of the harvest. He also observes that such

practices are still encountered in Portugal.

Employing the framework which we have adopted for the descriptive

analysis of religions, following Joachim Wach, we note the principal

components of this religious system, which was coextensive with the

natural group.

Doctrines and beliefs

Rarely, where religious devotion is focused upon ritual santi-

fication of daily acts and, in other ways, upon the mystical, is any

particular attention given to intellectual expressions of the faith.

This does not mean that belief, in such relatively illiterate socie-

ties, is unimportant. On the contrary, the constant and repetitive

dramatization of belief, in the rituals of day, week, season, and year,

serves the functions of transmitting and perpetuating the beliefs,

and of allowing them uninhabited emotional expression in the local

society. In this manner belief is reinforced, and, although no belief

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[6]A. H. Oliveira Marques, A Sociedade Medieval Portuguesa,
Lisbon: Livraria Sá da Costa Editôra, 1964, p. 163.

is immune to loss of vitality and to embodiment in a dead ritual, the union of concept and emotion in the ritual imparts a sacred quality to the act and ensures its continuation. Sanctions are imposed more for ritual deviance than for intellectual disbelief. In Portugal and Brazil, the Inquisition was not directed against "heretics," but against "blasphemers." Generally, the blasphemy was an expression of exasperation at the failure of the functionalism to give the desired material or practical results.

We consider under this heading the place of doctrine in the ritualistic religion of an illiterate society; the veneration of the saints; sin, punishment, and salvation; popular superstition; and messianic hopes.

Widespread illiteracy, ignorance among the clergy, and a ritualism through which the clerical hierarchy exercised a high degree of social control, all militated against the development of a strong theological education for the priests and against formal doctrinal instruction of the people. Under such conditions, there was little avowed heresy but much ignorance of Church doctrine, on all social levels. It was natural that much of the Church's teaching should be done through religious art, in the temple and in the home. Religious expression in general appealed largely to the senses: in painting, sculpture, and the figures caught in glass and tapestry; in the upward reach of the church-building, and in its great doors open for all village activities; and above all, in the ubiquitous Crucifix.

Certainly the characteristic belief of this medieval Catholicism—still alive in much of Portugal and Brazil -- is the functional belief

in the saints as beings to be venerated and called upon for help. The ✓

saint is believed to be able to calm the terror inspired by the spirit-

world on the one hand, and a distant and wrathful God on the other.

He is called upon for miraculous help and deliverance, and as a visible

listener and consoler who can humanize religion and sanctify the human

plea before the Almighty. He is an intermediary who can be found in

the church, or kept at home, or dealt with at the road-side shrine.

The type of commerce with the spirit-world which is represented

by the popular cult of the saints has been an important point of trans-

fer from Roman Catholic to Spiritist belief for great numbers of

people.

On the level of doctrine and belief, Roman Catholicism is

above all a religion of salvation. Eternal life is the great issue.

The elements most prominent in the exhortations of the priests in

colonial times -- and up to the present, in many localities -- were

the threat of Hell and the power of the clergy to aid in avoiding it.

Therefore, the emphasis on sin and punishment was heavy, with sin

considered principally as carnality, and this, in turn, equated with

sex.

In this manner great attention was focused upon sinful behavior,

and a complex causistic classification of sins and their corresponding

penances was developed. For example, the smelling of a flower could be

either in the praise of God, or a carnal act of voluptous pleasure.

Opportunity was given to the rich to compensate for sinful acts with

gifts to the Church, and for the poor to be constant in church

devotions, as their respective acts of penance. Later, in the nine-

teenth and twentieth centuries, these beliefs were to appear unjust or

otherwise unacceptable to many, great numbers of whom would find comfort in the reincarnationist evolution taught by the Spiritists.

The type of religious mentality which is here described possesses also the traits of credulity and superstition. Oliveira Marques notes the persistence in popular custom of practices related to ancient cults and superstitious beliefs. Many of these still carry a façade of nominal Christianity. The existence of many others is made evident, says this historian, by the "long roll" of them named as sins in records of the Church, with their proper penances duly established.

In a recent article, one writer has indicated what he considers to be two major "roots of Spiritism" in medieval and modern Portugal. These are the practice of witch-craft and the persistence of the socio-political messianic hope known as "Sebastianism."[7] It is true that there is some congruence between the psycho-social factors associated with the prevalence of superstitious beliefs and practices and those associated with phenomena such as "spirit-possession," "exorcism," et cetera. Even so, it is also true that witch-craft and related practices exist in many areas, including large parts of Europe, in which Spiritism is unknown. Moreover, in certain countries such as England and Germany, in which Spiritism is relatively unimportant, belief in ghosts is nevertheless common.

With regard to messianism as a preparation for Spiritism it must be remembered that messianic beliefs are normally found among oppressed

[7] Donald Warren, Jr., "Portuguese Roots of Brazilian Spiritism," Luso-Brazilian Review, Vol. 5, no. 2 (December, 1968), pp. 3-33.

rural populations and other "pariah peoples." Many of their members, on migration to urban centers, may very well enter into "low-spiritist" practices related to voo-dooism. Few members of such groups, however, are attracted to the low-key evolutionist preachments -- diametrically opposed to messianic apocalypticism -- of such indoctrinators as Allan Kardec.[8] The isolated rural descendants of the Portuguese colonists and later immigrants, who according to Warren √ would have preserved most completely the folklore of the mother country, are those among whom Spiritist organization and practice are least found.[9] Finally, all types of Brazilian Spiritist activities are entered into by great numbers of people of the most varied ethnic backgrounds.

Thus, we are in complete agreement with Warren that the religious beliefs and superstitions of the Portuguese were among the elements involved in the formation of the Brazilian ambience in which Spiritism would later take root. We do not feel, however, that the evidence presented by Warren points to the causal relationships which he has indicated.

This concludes the discussion of the belief system of the Portuguese colonizers of Brazil. We turn now to the examination of their cultic activities.

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[8]Cf. Maria Isaura Pereira de Queiroz, O Messianismo -- no Brasil e no Mundo, São Paulo: Dominus Editora, 1965, pp. 93-115, 282-307; and Yonina Talmon, "Pursuit of the Millenium: The Relation Between Religions and Social Change," Archives Européenes de Sociologie, Vol. 3, no. 1 (1962), pp. 125-148.

[9]Professor Warren has employed as one of his sources the same work of A. H. Oliveira Marques to which repeated reference is made in

The cultus: ritual and observances

In view of such ideological conditions as those found in medieval Portugal, it is not surprising that the three basic religious practices were the hearing of the Mass, confession, and penance. The fear of Hell was the mainspring of much devotion. There was much fasting; and set hours of prayer in the home, especially during seasons such as Lent, were the rule. Reference has already been made to the penetration of ritual to the steps and stages of daily life.

The Portuguese were unusually given to pilgrimages, which were considered to be among the most efficacious means of obtaining indulgences, as well as offering chances for the enlarging of the villagers' restricted horizons. To this end, "throughout the whole country there had grown up churches, chapels, and shrines, all of them sanctuaries of miraculous images and objects of fervent devotion,"[10] to which king and peasant alike repaired, the former often conspicuous in humble attire and afoot, the latter wide-eyed with touristic wonder and pious awe. This aspect of the mystical life, the pilgrimage to the holy place, still holds sway in the lives of devoted Brazilian Catholics. An outstanding instance of this is the existence of the shrine of Nossa Senhora Aparecida in the Paulista town of Aparecida do Norte -- a town almost exclusively religious in function -- and other local, regional, and national shrines.

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the present study. The writer has conferred with Prof. Oliveira Marques on the points made here, and has found that the historian's views coincide with his own.

[10]Oliveira Marques, op. cit., p. 169.

Chroniclers of the colonial period describe the emphasis upon externalities and the lack of depth of religious sentiment which prevailed and which has continued into the modern era. João Cruz Costa quotes an oft-cited passage of Father Júlio Maria, a leading Roman Catholic figure of the nineteenth century:

> Ceremonies which fail to edify; devotions which fail to purify the spirit; novenas which reveal no fervor; processions which do naught but entertain; festivals which neither benefit the soul nor give glory to God -- this is what has befallen the glorious and majestic practices of Catholic worship in the parishes of Brazil.[11]

In Chapter VI, the subservience of the Church to the land-owners in the colonial period is indicated. During the period of the Empire, in the nineteenth century, the ecclesiastical hierarchy became deeply compromised with the political regime, and lacked both administrative autonomy and moral authority. The intense personalism of the Brazilian people has made it difficult for them to "separate the man from the act," and disrespect for the clergy undermined belief in the efficacy of the Sacraments. There was a widening rift between such men as Father Diogo Antonio Feijó, the regent of the boy-emperor Pedro II, and enlightened men of culture. Such men remained in the Church by custom or out of respect for family tradition. Cruz Costa has a reference to the emperor himself which even today reflects the religious attitudes of multitudes of Brazilian people: "Dom Pedro II, like his

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[11]João Cruz Costa, A History of Ideas in Brazil, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1964, pp. 55-56.

cultured contemporaries, was a Voltairean -- a rationalist who somehow managed to reconcile a vague spiritualism with Catholicism."[12]

We turn now to the third aspect of the Roman Catholic heritage of the Brazilians: its social organizational patterns.

The religious body as social group

The Church in Portugal, and later in Brazil, was coextensive with society. Except for the presence of a very small number of Jews and others, the Church was what Wach refers to as a natural or societal religious group, embracing every member of society from birth to death.

Thus it was that common religious practice could permeate all of life; that religious law could be promulgated, and its flouting be punished, by the king; and that deviance from custom in any area of life might come under local religious sanction. Hierarchical authority in religion was accompanied by, and often identical with, civil authoritarianism.

In the midst of a generalized religiosity, the mendicant and other religious orders -- some of them monastic -- provided institutionalized means of giving deeper and more specific expression to piety, in addition to serving the economic and social functions which were characteristic of them throughout medieval Europe. Laymen developed confrarias, or brotherhoods, a type of religious trade-guild, which promoted the observance of certain feast-days and other seasons of the Church, and provided mutual aid for the members and works of charity in the community. As membership for the craftsmen became

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[12]Ibid., p. 57.

obligatory, the craft union aspect developed and the more spiritual and charitable functions waned in importance.[13]

Thus, on the local and the more general levels, the Church was the focus, and the centrally-located local temple often the scene, of the social life of the people, the slow rhythm of life being measured by the passing of the days and seasons of ritual observance and religious feast.

A low level of personal and public morality was promoted by the following: an atmosphere of unnatural and excitable piety; a religious fixation on carnality, both in sin and in its punishment; and a society composed chiefly of an idle nobility and clergy and a brutalized lower class. In addition to Fernão Lopes, famed chronicler of the 14th century, Portuguese writers such as Alexandre Herculano in the last century and the more modern Teófilo Braga and Mário Martins are among the many who have commented on these conditions. Oliveira Marques notes that the clergy were not -- as is often supposed -- worse than others of the upper classes, except as their vocation implied different standards. "Not a few women preferred a liaison (with a priest) to a normal marriage, as a means of satisfying their desires for luxury and wealth," this author reports, and he goes on to cite the great numbers of certificates of legitimacy which had to be secured for the children of the clergy.[14] Thus the laxity of the priests in Brazil --

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[13]Oliveira Marques, op. cit., pp. 151-152, 172, 182, 242, 244.

[14]Ibid., pp. 136-137.

many of whom also took concubines -- was not a new thing, but, in the Brazilian phrase, vinha de longe, "came from a long way back," in space and time.

A decisive element in the organized religious body consisted of the religious orders. The outstanding example of religious motivation in colonizing was the dedication of the members of the Society of Jesus to their twin objectives: the Christianizing of the Indians and the building of Brazilian civilization through education.[15] This activity itself was a product of the socio-religious and intellectual ferment of sixteenth-century Europe. In 1549, 15 years after Ignatious Loyola had founded the Society of Jesus in order to counteract the Protestant movement, a group of Jesuits accompanied Tomé de Souza, first governor-general of Brazil, to the colony. Further mention of their work is made in this and subsequent sections. Their civilizing efforts came to an end in 1759, when they were officially expelled.

Aside from the over-statements such as those cited earlier, concerning the role of religion in Brazilian life, the high place generally accorded the leaders of various religious orders and the popular Roman Catholic piety in the formation of the Brazilian society and character is well-deserved. The two "founding Fathers," Manuel de Nóbrega and José de Anchieta, of disciplined missionary fervor and political acumen; Father Antonio Vieira, the powerful preacher and defender of Indians and slaves; Friar Vicente de Salvador; Friar Caneca, the patriot; and Mont'Alverne, preacher to the emperors --

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[15] Fr. Serafim Leite, Páginas de Historia do Brasil, São Paulo: Companhia Editôra Nacional, 1937, Ch. I, and Fernando de Azevedo, op. cit., pp. 141-150.

these and such students of their as Eusébio and Gregório de Matos, were decisive figures in the political, social, and literary development of life in Brazil.

An important aspect of the role of the Church as a social body in the formation of Brazilian society was the subservience of the Church to landed interests. For three centuries and more this society centered upon the large agricultural holding. With political power in the hands of the "senhores de engenho," who lived on their properties, there were few functions to be carried out by towns, and the Roman Catholic Church lacked a focus for centralized control. The Jesuits, during their two centuries in colonial Brazil, dedicated their efforts in large measure to the mission work among the Indians. They understood this mission to consist in great part of clothing the Indians totally with their own Portuguese culture. For this purpose, they developed large plantations and sugar mills, to the extent that Azevedo could refer to the Jesuit as "the great colonial producer, the greatest plantation owner of the tropics."[16] This is probably an exaggeration, in view of the enormous holdings in the hands of a few colonial families. In any case, as Smith has pointed out, the Church never had land-holdings in Brazil on a scale even remotely approaching that which it enjoyed in the Spanish-American territories. Moreover, because of a royal letter issued on February 23, 1711, lands could not thenceforth be passed to religious orders, and many properties were owned by local chapels; these were usually small.[17]

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[16]Azevedo, op. cit., p. 350.

[17]T. Lynn Smith, Brazil: People and Institutions, 3rd ed., Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1963, pp. 290, 322.

As is indicated in the discussion of the family in Chapter VI, one aspect of the extended family organization was the tying of the priest-hood to the land-owning families. A common figure in the great houses was the uncle-Father, a brother or a cousin of the master who returned from the seminary as the spiritual shepherd of the plantation community, the tutor of the children, and often -- with more or less discretion -- the progenitor of his own brood of mulatto children. After the victory of the large landed proprietors over the Jesuits, in the eighteenth century, the clergy was placed in an even more dependent relationship to the landowners.

Lack of mechanisms for protest and change

It is typical of "natural" religious institutions that they discourage the development of social and cultic mechanisms for the formulation of protest or the institution of change.[18] Wach delineates four types of religious protests: "first, the isolated protest, individual criticism and deviation from the rest of the community; second, the collective protest; [third and fourth] both kinds either within the main body, or leading to secession."[19]

Religious protests or efforts at change may take place in any of the three areas which have been examined: doctrinal, cultic, or social. Movements of doctrinal protest normally come -- among the Christian churches -- as a result of renewed emphasis upon Biblical

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[18]Joachim Wach, Sociology of Religion, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1944, pp. 289 ff.

[19]Ibid., p. 156.

and theological studies; we have seen that Brazilian Catholicism has presented little of such emphasis. Within a highly centralized ecclesiastical hierarchy, such movements, which also are normally prerequisite to cultic changes, are restricted to the clergy, and their spontaneous appearance is highly improbable. Until the modern, largely secular, movements of social protest began to impinge also upon the religious institutions, the only types of religious protest that were possible on any significant scale were laxity in religious observance and the practice of superstition. Such negative isolated expressions, and the futile cultic sanctions and moralistic preachments with which they were combatted by the clergy, only attested to the servility of the religious institution, which was incapable of calling into question the social order. Maximum ecclesiastical bodies, in Wach's terminology, are generally "naively positive" with regard to the society of which they are a part.

Having noted briefly the principal doctrinal, cultic, and social features of Roman Catholicism as they have affected, and have been expressed in, Brazilian life, we turn now to the Indian and African backgrounds.

The Religious Influence of the Indian and the Negro

Although such writers as Azevedo and Pedro Calmon refer to the effects of the Indian and the Negro upon the character of Brazilian religion, none of them present specific contributions of the Indian which might have endured and become a part of Brazil's general

religious heritage. The indigenous culture encountered by the
Portuguese explorer and colonist was far simpler and more primitive in
content and much weaker and less developed in institutions than were
the complex civilizations which faced many of the Spanish conquista-
dores. To this day, the over-all reaction of the Indian to the advance
of the white man has been a combination of submission and withdrawal.
Except for some influence of pajelança, or shamanism, in isolated areas
of the Amazon country, the contribution of the Indian has been re-
stricted largely to the domestic and literary aspects of culture.[20]

Freyre has emphasized the major role played by the Negro slaves,
particularly the women within the houses of their masters, in shaping
the total outlook and patterns of behavior -- including the religious
-- of the children of the Portuguese from the day of their birth. An
important part of this influence, Freyre reminds us, was Catholic:
"I am concerned with correcting the idea that it was through his nurse
that the child received the evil influences of the slave hut."[21]

In this, he is emphasizing the human warmth and kindliness which
the Negroes imparted to their adopted Roman Catholic observance. This
latter, on the part of the whites, was apt to be merely formal, when
not motivated by fear. Much of the burden of Freyre's massive work,

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[20]Cf. Artur Ramos, Introdução à Anthropologia Brasileira, Rio de
Janeiro: Casa do Estudante do Brasil, 1943; Azevedo, op. cit., pp.
147-149, 303-304, 330-331; Pedro Calmon, Espírito da Sociedade Colonial,
São Paulo: Companhia Editôra Nacional, 1935, pp. 182-199.

[21]Gilberto Freyre, The Masters and the Slaves, trans Samuel Putnam,
2nd Eng. ed., rev., New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1961, p. 372.

however, has been the tracing of the manner in which the institution of slavery infused into Brazilian society and culture elements of extreme importance -- including those of the African religions. In the volume referred to above, he enumerates religious fears and superstitious beliefs which passed from the slaves to the children of both blacks and whites.[22] The effects of this transmission of beliefs, as late as the nineteenth century -- and, in many places, to the present time -- are set forth in another work:

> Fetishism was predominant. At times the porch of a house was found in the morning to be spattered with sand from the cemetery; or cabalistic signs were scratched on the wall with charcoal; or pans full of vile things or frogs with their mouths sewn shut would appear in the yard. It was fetishism. The fear of black magic over-shadowed the lives of many women. Filled with anxiety, the poor matrons sent for Negroes known to them who could take the spell from their houses. The struggle against witchcraft was one of the constant preoccupations, one of the tasks with which a housewife of the Northeast was faced in the nineteenth century.[23]

It is important to observe that black magic was fought with still stronger powers, and rarely with exorcisms or other practices of the Church alone; the domestic intertwining of two cultures facilitated the syncretism which began in the overt submission of the imported African to Roman Catholic ritual.

As in the case of the Indian beliefs and practices, much of the African heritage was concerned with superstitions which were not

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[22]Ibid.

[23]Gilberto Freyre, Região e Tradição, Rio de Janeiro: Livraria José Olympio Editôra, 1941, p. 139.

intrinsically religious, and which have had their counterparts in many cultures, alongside various types of religion. Nevertheless, the African religions have been among the most influential of the cultural elements brought by the slaves. The Afro-Brazilian cults, loosely known as "low spiritism," constitute a major religious and social phenomenon in Brazil. Their emphasis upon ritual healing is beginning to be felt strongly among rationalistic Kardecists.

Despite the presence of such disparate religious elements, the nineteenth-century Brazilian could conceive of himself as belonging to only one religious institution, the Roman Catholic Church. Indeed, vast numbers of people knew of no other. As commercial and cultural ties with Europe and North America grew stronger, new expressions of religious faith were brought to Brazil which were to produce incalculable social effects in that country. These are considered in the following section.

The Development of Religious Pluralism

The position of the Roman Catholic Church as a maximum-type ecclesiastical body, co-terminous with a major part of the population of Brazil, continues until the present. Its increasing loss or weakening of functions for and control over the people led to the sharpening of distinctions not only between the professionally "religious" and the laity, but between the devoted laymen, "beatos," and the more or less indifferent mass. It remained, however, for exogenous groups to introduce new doctrines, practices, and religious social

structures which would make of the Catholic Church one among several competing religious bodies.

The growing individualization and rationalization of human life in the modern era contributed to the weakening of traditional religious institutions and to the development of a plurality of religious sects and denominations. This was the case in both France -- the home of Kardecism -- and Brazil, the country in which Spiritism has had its greatest growth.

The teachings of Allan Kardec were brought to Brazil no later than the early 1860's, and conditions surrounding their acceptance there are similar in many ways to those related to the growth of Spiritism in France itself. (In Chapter VI, we concern ourselves with intellectual and other influences of France which were brought to bear upon Brazil.) Here we merely indicate certain aspects of French religious life that had a direct effect during this period upon Brazilians who were discovering Kardec as they studied in Paris. These same aspects exercised a more diffuse effect as parts of the general French impact upon Brazilian culture and societal life.

The Roman Catholic hierarchies in France and in Brazil passed through similar vicissitudes, in subordination to their respective governments, and to the Papacy, during the nineteenth century. In both cases there were movements for latitude and liberty for the clergy, but these movements had different motivations and expressions. A distinguished historian has noted that in France, by 1830, the relative freedom of expression enjoyed by the people was also of value to the Church in the identification of its mission of service. "In

order to take their place in the life of the nation...the Catholics had to recognize Liberalism as the basis of action."[24] The Liberalizing movement was led by Montalembert and Lamennais, who were also instrumental in changing the liturgy from Roman to Gallican. The ethical expressions of religion were also emphasized: "Frédéric Ozanam (1813-1853) gathered Catholic students at the universities into a society for charitable activity among the working classes, and thus became the forerunner of 'social Catholicism.'"[25] This liberal movement was brusquely cut off by the Syllabus of Pope Pius IX in 1864.

Nevertheless, the image of a servant Church had been upheld before the people. In this respect the Brazilian experience was of a contrary nature. The position of Roman Catholicism as the official religion of the Empire had been found to be a trap, as we have indicated, and as far-sighted clergymen had warned, in the constituent assembly of 1823. This condition was brought to a head in 1872, when two of the leading bishops ordered their priests to withdraw from the Masons, and were themselves finally imprisoned by the Crown. The issue at stake was not -- as in France -- the Church's place in the socio-religious life of the nation, but the limits of its political power and of its own internal control. The hierarchy in general was pleased with the separation of its power from those of the State in the

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[24]Ernst Robert Curtius, The Civilization of France, trans. Olive Wyon, New York: Macmillan, 1932, p. 142.

[25]Ibid., p. 143. Cf. also A. Latreille, E. Delaruelle, J. R. Palanque, and R. Rémond, Histoire du Catolicisme en France, Vol. 3, Paris: Editions Spes, 1962, pp. 301-324, 423 ff.

republican decree of November 15, 1889. However, from that period on, the Church's ultramontane tendency helped to draw it even further away from the life of the people.

Thus while the French codifier of Spiritism and the young Brazilians who were studying in his homeland were witnessing the preaching of humanity as a high religious value -- perhaps the highest -- the stronger tendencies in the dominant religious institution of the Land of the True Cross were away from the ministry to basic human needs. At the same time other groups were at work which did manifest concern with the welfare of society, at the same time that they demanded a commitment which for many of their followers was almost religious.

For example, Masonry, with emphasis upon humanitarian and democratic values, created another center of loyalty which was often in opposition to the Church. It helped to meet certain social needs of its own members (relatively few in number) and to promote, at least verbally, liberal ideas. Positivism, which is treated in some detail in Chapter VI, brought -- in addition to its intellectual function -- a type of quasi-religious expression to an even smaller elite. Much of the importance of such movements lies in their popularization of the assumption that commitment to a social or religious system should be made on the basis of rational choice. There were other, more specifically religious, forces at work to complete the creation of a religious pluralism in Brazilian society, and we turn to them at this point.

The Advent and Growth of Protestant Churches

During the 1960's, several Protestant bodies celebrated the
centenary of the beginning of their missionary efforts in Brazil.
In the early days, legal restrictions and the opposition of the Roman
Catholic Church were partially responsible for the channelling of a
great part of their resources of the Methodists and Presbyterians,
in particular, to educational work. In this way they were able to
make a legitimate, acceptable entrance into the social system with a
vital contribution in an area in which Brazil was weak and also to
gain the good will and support of many substantial citizens. Their
religious activity had two major foci: the towns in which the schools
were operated as well as others from which students were drawn, and
the great rural areas.

Fernando de Azevedo has pointed out the function of the rivalry
between the Protestant and Catholic forces in bringing them to a
sharpening of their belief and to greater exertions in ministering to
the material, intellectual, and spiritual needs of the population.[26]
The posing of options in matters of religion was, in most areas, an
innovation. The alternatives were put in terms of all of the funda-
mental aspects of religious experience: of doctrinal belief (with the
reading of the Bible, and therefore a modicum of education, as a
central issue); of loyalty to and participation in the central social
institutions (the religious and often the familial); of the moral life
and eternal destiny; and of pageantry and priestliness as over against

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[26]Azevedo, op. cit., pp. 157-159.

personal, inner decision. With the presence of a plurality of well-articulated religious statuses, the factor of choice came to be present in Brazilian religion to a far greater extent than formerly.

Other important developments in Brazilian Protestantism were the arrival within a few decades of large numbers of German Lutherans, the rise and growth of Pentecostal sects, and the increasing nationalization of all the Protestant groups. Nevertheless, in relation to the rise and growth of Spiritism in Brazil, the most important aspect of the advent of the Protestants is the nature of the major missionary Protestant denominations mentioned above. These groups put a premium upon education, rational decision, personal experience in religion, moral uprightness, and the practical application of religious principles in every-day life. These features, which they shared with Spiritism, were instrumental in guiding the development of the major segments of these denominations into middle-class organizations. Thus the sociological similarities exhibited by the Protestant denominations and the groups of Spiritist believers were indicative of the competition which would inevitably develop among them, as well as between each of them and Roman Catholicism. That the similarities and parallelisms have been only partial is apparent in the following section. This, however, does not affect the present point: that Protestantism was largely instrumental in creating a condition of "religious pluralism" in Brazil, and that Spiritism was also involved in bringing about this condition and in profiting from it.

Spiritism on the Scene in Nineteenth-Century Brazil

By 1850, the rappings heard by the Fox sisters (Cf. supra, p. 22) had been transformed, in the salons and parlors of America and Europe, into actual moving of tables, chairs, hats, and other objects, under the conditions of the séance.

A Spiritist writer has verified, through newspaper accounts in Rio de Janeiro, that the table-turning phenomenon reached that city in 1853,[27] and the newspapers of other major cities report the spread of the fad. Mesmer's "animal magnetism," together with homeopathic medicine, were already in use by a few Brazilian physicians during the 1840's.[28] The beginning of Spiritism in Brazil, however, is officially identified with a séance held in Salvador, Bahia on September 17, 1865, under the direction of Luis Olympio Telles de Menezes, a physician. In the same year Telles de Menezes defended the teachings of Allan Kardec in a Bahian newspaper, an act for which he

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[27]Zêus Wantuil, As Mesas Girantes e o Espiritismo, Rio de Janeiro: Federação Espírita Brasileira, 1958, pp. 7 ff.

[28]Isidoro Duarte Santos, O Espiritismo no Brasil (Ecos de uma Viagem), Rio de Janeiro: J. Ozon Editor, 1961, p. 226. The author, director of Estudos Psíquicos, official organ of Portuguese Spiritism, in this work describes (euphorically but helpfully) the people, the activities, and the installations of Spiritism in a number of Brazilian cities visited by him. In the item cited, he refers to two physicians, Bento Mure and Vicente Martins, as "famous doctors" who conducted a great charitable enterprise in which they employed mediunic trances. Many such items, for which there is, to this writer's knowledge, no documentation, will be referred to as historical, since they are a part of the accepted Spiritist lore. Mention is also made of these two men by Francisco Candido Xavier in his psychographed history of Brazil, Brasil: Coração do Mundo e Pátria do Evangelho, 6th ed., Rio de Janeiro: Federação Espírita Brasileira, 1957, p. 141.

received the appreciative acknowlegement of the Master himself. A short-lived organization was formed, with the name "Grupo Familiar de Espiritismo"; in 1869 -- the year of Kardec's death -- this group published the first Brazilian Spiritist periodical, O Eco de Além-Túmulo (The Echo from Beyond the Grave). The journal was circulated only for one year. In 1873, the "Grupo Confúcio" was formed in Rio de Janeiro, including in its number professional and military men. Under the auspices of this group, and despite much criticism, the Livraria B. L. Garnier, the nation's largest printing establishment, published the Spiritist Pentateuch, Kardec's five basic works. Further developments in the organization and growth of Spiritism are recounted in Chapter IV.

A recent biographical sketch of Telles de Menezes indicates that the brief existence of many of the early Spiritist organizations was not due entirely to the doctrinal and other dissensions which swirled about the new movement.[29] When, in 1871, Telles de Menzes and 29 others attempted to charter the "Sociedade Espírita Brasileira," Godoy reports that despite civil approval, they were denied the charter by the negative reply of the authorities of the established religion.[30] The group then re-applied, indicating that the society was of a scientific nature, and denominating it the "Associação Espirítica

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[29]Paulo Alves de Godoy, "Centenário do Primeiro Jornal Espírita do Brasil e a Obra de Telles de Menezes," ANUÁRIO ESPÍRITA 1969, Araras: Instituto de Difusão Espírita, 1969, pp. 73-76.

[30]Ibid., p. 76.

Brasileira." Such conditions must have been of some aid to those Spiritists who insisted, in the internal struggles of the movement, upon the scientific and non-religious nature of the doctrine.

Friar Boaventura Kloppenburg, ready to demonstrate the liberty enjoyed by the Spiritists, cites the following passage from a report sent by the "Grupo Confúcio," on April 11, 1874, to the Revue Spirite in Paris:

> ...[hoping that] with the help of the men of good will, and thanks to the freedom of the press which we enjoy here without restrictions, the propaganda so propitiously begun may continue to grow with each day, without obstacles, and will not be long in arriving in the most distant provinces of the Empire.[31]

Heavy polemics involved both Spiritists and Catholics, however, and outside cosmopolitan Rio, a city in which Spiritism had highly placed friends, greater repression of the new doctrine was possible. Even in the capital, the interloper was under attack, especially as it sought recognition as a religion. Kloppenburg records the reaction of a Church paper, O Apóstolo:

> The Spiritists miss no occasion to antagonize the Church....We have already reached the time when a religion can be instituted just like any social club: it is merely a matter of drawing up the by-laws, appointing the leader and beginning to marry and baptize and exercise all the functions of religion. This is real progress, and humanity has gone a long way with Spiritism.[32]

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[31]Boaventura Kloppenburg, O Espiritismo no Brasil, Petrópolis: Editôra Vozes, 1960, p. 16.

[32]Ibid., p. 17.

Thus in the final third of the nineteenth century, Brazilian society came to feel the effects of a genuine religious pluralism. Previously, the clergy often had had to deal with the heathenish practices and superstitions of the African religions, with occasional blasphemies or heresies, and with the widespread indifference to the Church, but all these had been considered as conflicts within the system. Now, with lines drawn between the official religion on the one hand, and the Protestant denominations and Spiritism on the other, religion was a matter of choice. There was also to become increasingly apparent within Roman Catholicism itself the distinction between those who made their faith a question of conscious decision and those who were nominal adherents. The assertion which is often heard, "Sou católico praticante," is one small manifestation of the manner in which the ecclesia has taken on certain characteristics of a denomination.

CHAPTER IV

ESSENTIAL FEATURES OF SPIRITISM IN BRAZIL

In this chapter, it is our purpose to examine the movement under study, within the framework of its three major forms of expression: doctrines and beliefs, cultic activities, and internal social relationships.

Spiritist Doctrine According to Allan Kardec

Hippolyte Léon Denizard Rivail (1803-1869), resident of Paris, professor of mathematics, science, and grammar, was introduced in 1854, to the "table turning" phenomena of the spiritualist séances then popular in Europe. His inquisitive mind was intrigued by a message given to him through two young girls who were mediums, and signed, "Spirit of Truth." In essence, the message informed him that spirits of a very high rank would continue to communicate with him through the two mediums, since he had been selected for a mission of the highest order.

A methodical man by nature, Rivail -- who was not himself a medium -- proceeded to "try the spirits." The spirit communications had been made at first through a code of taps of the séance table. A scientistic pedant, Rivail assumed that such patterned "effects" must have an intelligent "cause," the most plausible one being that which was claimed in the messages...the activity of spirits. He hit upon a system of "planchette-writing," whereby the spirits guided a pencil attached to a small basket, upon which the mediums' fingers were lightly laid. Rivail then began an extensive interrogation, in which the revelatory

spirits guided, answered, and commented on a systematized series of questions concerning life and the universe.

On April 30 of 1856, according to a biographer,[1] the "Spirit of Truth" announced to Rivail that his mission on earth was to publish and promulgate, under the pen name "Allan Kardec," the teachings which he had received from the spirits. One year later he brought out Le Livre des Espirits, first in an abbreviated form, and, in a few months, in a second and fuller edition which has remained definitive for his followers to this day.

This adaptation of the experimental method became the hallmark of the Spiritists' mediunic activity in the face of a skeptical world. In addition to his own epitaph, Kardec's followers had the following words inscribed on his tomb in the cemetery of Pére Lachaise, in Paris:

Allan Kardec

Fondateur de la Philosophie spirite.
Tout effet a une cause.
Tout effet intelligent
a une cause intelligente.
La puissance de la cause
est en raison de la grandeur de l'effet.
3 octobre 1804 -- 31 mars 1869

Thus a major characteristic of Kardec's writings is the constant appeal to the candid consideration of facts as they are observed, in accordance with the self-confident scientistic ethos of his century. For example, the objectors to spiritistic manifestations, who dub them works of the devil, are reminded: "...if they exist, it can only be with

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[1]André Moreil, La Vie et L'Oeuvre d'Allan Kardec, Paris: Éditions Sperar, 1961.

the permission of God, and how then can we, without impiety, believe that He would permit them to occur only for a bad purpose...? Such a supposition is contrary alike to the simplest dictates of religion and of common sense."[2]

In the same way, Biblical literalism is eschewed. The harmonization of the Genesis narrative of the Creation and the miracles of the Bible with the scientific knowledge and opinions of his day is reminiscent of the general approach accepted by many today: to wit, that scientific error on the part of Biblical writers does not mar the spiritual value of that which they have to say. Thus, for Allan Kardec and the adherents of his doctrine, the Bible is not a final authority, and where it is in conflict with Spiritist doctrine, the latter is definitive.

The Spread of the Teachings of Kardec

Le Livre des Esprits, and, to a lesser extent, the more practically-oriented Le Livre des Médiums (1861) and a commentary of the four Gospels of the New Testament, L'Évangile selon le Spiritisme (1864), provide the basic content of Spiritist doctrine. With his phlegmatic, diffident manner, Kardec laid no claims to originality for them, considering himself merely a systematizer and codifier. "History," he stated, concluding the preface to his first work, "proves that most of the ideas herein set forth have been held by the most eminent thinkers of ancient

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[2]Allan Kardec, The Spirits' Book, trans. Anna Blackwell, São Paulo: Livraria Allan Kardec Editôra, 1964, p. 44.

and of modern times, and thus gives to them the additional sanction of its testimony."

All of the works mentioned, and some of Kardec's lesser writings, have gone through many editions in French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, and other languages. An English translation of Le Livre des Esprits was made circa 1880 by Anna Blackwell, who gave it the rather awkward title, The Spirits' Book.[3] The publication of Kardec's works in Brazil is mentioned in some detail at a later point.

Allan Kardec's doctrinal presentation appears to have provided a rallying point for those -- especially in Europe -- who had been intrigued by the "psychic phenomena" but had not found a meaningful way in which to relate them to their own existence. Shortly after the publication of Le Livre des Esprits in 1857, Kardec organized the Societé Parisienne des Études Psychologiques and founded, as its official organ, the Revue Spirite, which is still published. Kardec received correspondence and detailed reports concerning spirit messages and other spiritistic phenomena from many parts of the world. Although his biographers tell of his careful and systematic study of these voluminous reports, they are considered only as confirmatory of his published doctrinal formulations, and none of these latter were modified. Kardec's later writings consist of the spelling out in greater detail or the summarizing of his teaching in the major works; these later books are:

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[3]This translation was recently brought out, after years of being out of print, in its first Brazilian printing in English, by the Livraria Allan Kardec Editôra (LAKE), São Paulo, 1964. A major purpose of this edition is its diffusion in Great Britain.

La Genèse, les Miracles et las Prédictions, selon le Spiritisme (1867),

Le Ciel et L'Enfer ou la Justice Divine selon le Spiritisme (1864),

Qui est le Spiritisme? (n.d.), Le Spiritisme a sa plus Simple Expression

(n.d.), and collected occasional papers called Oeuvres Posthumes (n.d.).[4]

Although "spiritualism" has a substantial following in Great Britain,
Anglican orthodoxy and the traditional directions of English philosophy
have militated against the acceptance of the idea of reincarnation.
Thus, with Britain and America outside their camp, the works of Kardec
and of others of his movement have been little known in the English-
speaking world. The socio-cultural reasons for his acceptance in
southern Europe and South America are, of course, at the heart of the
present study.

The "Spiritualist Philosophy"

The Spirits' Book is given its title under the heading, "Spiritualist
Philosophy," and the resumé of Spiritist doctrine contained in this sec-
tion follows the plan of that work. The volume is divided into four
"books." The first deals with God, Creation, and the composition of the
universe. The second is concerned with spirits and man, the plurality
of existences through reincarnation, and the intervention of spirits in
the corporeal world. In the third book are presented the divine laws of
the universe, and Book Four is called "Hopes and Consolations." We pro-
ceed now to such consideration of these teachings as will throw light on
the socio-religious movement to which they are related in Brazil.

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[4] The editions used by the writer have in almost all cases been in
Portuguese; these editions will therefore be cited in this study.

The Kardecist Concept of Deity

"God is immutable, immaterial, unique, all-powerful, sovereignly just and good."[5] Thus Allan Kardec begins his summary of Spiritist doctrine. In accordance with the author's positivist background, Deity is described principally in terms of intelligence and power. God, having once created the universe, has left its direction to immutable laws; were He to interfere with them, this would show imperfection in Him, and instability in the universe.[6] This is, of course, simply a restatement of traditional deism.

Similarly, God's existence can be proven: Question 4, "What proof have we of the existence of God?" receives the reply, "The axiom you apply in all your scientific researches, 'There is no effect without a cause.' Search out the cause of whatever is not the work of man, and reason will furnish the answer...."[7]

God is one. Jesus was not divine, but a perfected Spirit; there is therefore no place for the Christian Church's doctrine of the Trinity.

Cosmology

Man's pride and imperfection are the causes of much ignorance. Yet through the spirits God can and does reveal to man that which is essential for his progress but which is beyond the pale of scientific investigation.

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[5]The Spirits' Book, p. 31.

[6]This is often important as an assurance to the timid and fearful that the occurrences in séances are simply natural phenomena. There is no supernatural; all is under the laws of God.

[7]The Spirits' Book, p. 64.

There are four aspects of the composition of the universe: The first aspect, "spirit," is the "intelligent principle of the universe," and the second, "matter," is its agent or instrument. There is, thirdly, another element, a "universal fluid," which contains the fourth, the "vital principle." The mediation of these is necessary for the spirit to be linked to matter and give it life.

There are, then, two worlds, a world of spirit and a world of matter. Spirits are created by God. Theirs is the enduring world; the material is transitory. The spirits are everywhere, though unseen.

Our globe is but one of millions of inhabited planets in the universe. As is shown in detail below, these "worlds" are crucial for the journey of the spirits throughout their existence.

The spirits form a hierarchy of three general orders: that of predominant ignorance and evil, when the spirits are as yet relatively undeveloped; that of predominant goodness; and that of perfectedness in knowledge and purity. These orders embrace a total of 10 "classes," or sub-divisions; the destiny of all spirits is to develop and progress through the 10 stages by their own efforts until they reach perfection. All spirits are of equal potential, though at lower stages in their existence they may be unaware of this. There are no "evil spirits" or "demons" in the popular sense, but through the exercise of their free will, spirits may be ignorantly rebellious or frivolously mischievous.

The Nature and Place of Man

The process of development of the spirits must be carried out largely under the conditions of corporeal existence; therefore, spirits must be incarnated in order to carry out their missions. Man has

been created by God to be the instrument in the incarnation of the spirits in our world. The universal fluid, or life-giving link referred to above, is described, in the case of man, as a "semi-material envelope," called a "perispirit." Man is thus composed of three elements, the spirit (or the soul), the body, and the perispirit which links them. Man's responsibility is great; for it is according to his deeds in this life that his spirit will find its place and mission in its next existence. His duty is to learn to obey God, the law-giver. The doctrine of grace, whereby God establishes a relationship of mutual trust and love, through his forgiveness and acceptance of man, is firmly rejected.

The special importance of "magnetic fluids" in Brazilian Spiritism

The idea of the "fluidic" action of spiritual forces is important for the directions taken by Spiritism in Brazil, in view of the emphasis on magical and spiritual healing in that country.

Allan Kardec adopted Mesmer's concept of "animal magnetism" as the operative force in spiritistic phenomena. It is through the mutual action of their perispiritic fluids that the medium and the incorporating spirits are thought to communicate and to channel efficacious forces to those in need.[8] One of the few references to healing made by Kardec in his major works concerns the basis for it in the action of a spirit upon the magnetic fluids.[9] He gives further attention to the

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[8]Allan Kardec, O Livro dos Médiuns, São Paulo: Editôra Pensamento, 1963, pp. 62-71.

[9]Ibid., p. 117.

subject in A Gênese, a large part of which is devoted to the "demytholo-gizing" of the miracles of the Bible. F. C. Xavier, through his in-fluential books, has popularized the application of a scientistic argot to the mediumistic processes, especially those of healing. In one of these books, the author purports to accompany Superior Spirits as they heal the sick through the instrumentality of devoted mediums. There is due association of the work with the names of William Crookes, the Curies, Roentgen, Einstein, et al., and the Spirits observe the inner states and actions of the mediums with the use of a sort of spiritual X-ray machine called a "psychoscope." They speak of men as being "generators of electromagnetic force," who also emit ultraviolet radiations. The selfless devotion of the mediums, say the Spirits, puts them in "appreciable vibratory conditions...able, therefore, to project mental rays..., assimilating superior currents and enriching the vital rays of which they are dynamos in common."[10]

One of the most influential of the books concerning spiritistic healing is particularly impressive to the average reader because of the copious use of scientific jargon, the presence of well-executed multi-colored drawings, anatomical charts, et cetera, and because of the introduction written by Sérgio Valle, a Spiritist medical doctor.[11] In this work also, the operation of the magnetic fluids is fundamental to the presentation.

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[10]F. C. Xavier, Nos Domínios da Mediunidade, Rio de Janeiro: Federaçao Espírita Brasileira, 1954, p. 24.

[11]Wenefledo de Toledo, Passes e Curas Espirituais, São Paulo: Editôra Pensamento, 1958.

This doctrinal emphasis is a major aspect of a fundamental turn which Brazilian Spiritism has taken: that toward a mystical charitable-ness, with emphasis on mental and physical healing as central to its mission in the universe. Such an emphasis upon thaumaturgy and religious therapy might well have been predicted on the basis of the instrumental character of religion and of the relation of religious sentiment to natural and physiological processes, which were indicated in Chapter III, on Brazilian religious backgrounds.

Reincarnation and ultimate destiny

Newly-created, undeveloped spirits -- all of equal intelligence at their beginnings -- gradually acquire consciousness of themselves and of their duty to obey the will of God, as they gain experience. Through reincarnation, the spirits progress to the final stage of perfect intelligence and rationality, which means perfection of decisions and choices of the divine will, which is characterized mainly by charity.

Kardec is at pains to emphasize that all movement is forward and upward, all reincarnation is to a higher place and form. Spirits do not regress; man cannot become animal, as he is thought to do in Hindu metempsychosis. Neither is there a continuity by which the spirits in animals "rise up" to human level; there is a qualitative difference. The necessity of progress is not considered as a negation of freedom. The different conditions faced in the successive incarnations are designed to stimulate the spirit in its progress, and to provide it with appropriate opportunities for retribution and expiation. This is the Law of Karma at work. If for every cause there is an effect, then also for every wrong, every act of ignorance or disobedience, there must be retribution in exactly the same measure. Legion are the stories

such as that of the man who stabs his enemy, and in his next incarnation is a paralytic in his right arm.

Paradoxically, this implacable law expresses the theodicy from which Spiritists profess to derive great comfort: here lies the justification for all of what appear in this life to be injustices, inequalities, and undeserved suffering. In the end, everything balances.

Faced by the objection that some of these ideas resembled doctrines of Pythagoras and of the sacred writings of India, Kardec blandly reiterated his observation that the truths enunciated by the spirits in his seances have been in the thoughts of great men from the earliest times. It is perhaps more than coincidental that he began his writing in the period when French and German scholars were in the forefront of the modern study of ancient and Oriental religions, and were translating their sacred writings. Such studies would not go unnoticed by a man with the interests held by Kardec.[12]

The numberless habitable worlds in the universe fall into categories which correspond to the various levels of development of the spirits. Even within our own solar system there is differentiation. It is apparent that the vale of tears which is the Earth is at a rude stage of evolution. Jupiter is at a far, far higher stage; Saturn, less so; Venus is superior to Earth; while Mars is at an even lower stage than ours. In this broad but finite perspective, with its wide range of possibilities, the apparent injustices, the cruel inequalities, and the seemingly undeserved suffering and evil of this world are seen as

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[12]Cf. Yvonne Castellan, O Espiritismo, São Paulo: Difusão Européia do Livro, 1955.

parts of a forward-moving process within which justice and equality are at work.

> To sum up: We assert that the doctrine of the
> plurality of existences is the only one which ex-
> plains what, without this doctrine, is unexplainable;
> that it is at once eminently consolatory and strictly
> conformable with the most rigorous justice;
> and that it is the anchor of safety which God
> in His mercy has provided for mankind.[13]

Many pages of Book Two of this volume are given over to questions representing the popularly curious mind: the infancy of spirits, their experience of death, their means and rates of locomotion, their sex (none), the relationships among those which have had previous kinship ties here on Earth, and many others. The third major subject treated in Book Two is the one which follows.

Intervention of the spirits in the corporeal world

Such types of intervention by spirits as thought-penetration, the influencing of historical events, the universality of guardian angels, and intervention in physical acts (very rare) are dealt with. Communication through mediums is mentioned only in the introduction of The Spirits' Book, in summary fashion; the full treatment of this is found in The Book of the Mediums.[14] In this latter volume are presented the conditions for development of the mediunic "gift," the various types of mediumistic activity -- speech, spiritwriting, clairvoyance, etc. -- and much practical guidance. The author's theme here is the evolutionary

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[13]Kardec, The Spirits' Book, p. 147.

[14]Kardec, O Livro dos Médiuns, pp. 138-200. In an appended glossary, a medium is defined as "a person who can serve as an intermediary between the Spirits and men," p. 335.

differentials among the non-incarnate spirits, differentials which determine the nature of their relationships with incarnate spirits; that is, human beings.

The Laws of Life and the Universe

Book Three of The Spirits' Book may be called the book of the laws. In positivistic fashion, Kardec felt that he had been given the observable and reasonable evidence, by spirit revelation, for the stating of certain principles as laws of life and as regulatory principles of the universe. We can only mention each by name here: the laws of adoration, of labor, of reproduction, of preservation, of destruction, social law, law of progress, of equality, of liberty, and the law of justice, love and charity. This last, by which we are commanded to achieve perfection, is also summed up in what Jesus has given to us as the Golden Rule.

The Ultimate Theodicy

The fourth and final book, called "Hopes and Consolations," is another section which was later expanded and developed into a larger work, Heaven and Hell. It sums up the theodicy which runs through from the beginning of the work, with the assurance that "Heaven" and "Hell," so violently insisted upon by formal Christianity as final, objective realities, are states which the soul creates for itself. The peace and joy of the one grow, and the tortures of the other diminish, as the spirit makes its way along the evolutionary path to perfection. The spirits

> ...teach us that there are no unpardonable sins, none
> that cannot be effaced by expiation. Man finds the
> means of accomplishing this in the different exist-
> ences which permit him to advance progressively, and

according to his desire and his efforts, towards [15]
the perfection that constitutes his ultimate aim.

The deistic rationalism, the pragmatic moralism, and the non-transcendent spiritism of this system leave it centered on man himself. The heart of the doctrine is reincarnation; all other major aspects of it are corollaries of the plurality of existences. From a practical, epistemological point of view, one of those aspects -- communication with the spirits -- might be considered just as basic, for acceptance of such communication is necessary to the authoritativeness of the doctrine.

Thus, in theory, the "Third Testament," or "Third Revelation," depends for its authority upon the acceptance of spirit communication as valid. However, what is posed is a problem in the sociology of knowledge: are the teachings and practices of Spiritism so in tune with certain socially-felt needs and societal changes and currents as to be accepted on their common-sense appeals? Do they in this manner lend credence themselves to the spirit-source to which they are attributed, regardless of its validity? The question which must be asked of every religious and social movement must be put in this case also: What are the latent societal factors in its inception and growth, and to what extent are they dependent upon the manifest factors? to what extent may the manifest factors depend upon them? These questions will come to a natural focus in the analytical sections of this study.

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[15] The Spirits' Book, p. 36.

From philosophy to religion

The principal expression given to a religious doctrine by its adherents can be intellectual, mystical, or practical. Which of these expressive emphases is taken in a given situation is partially determined by the kinds of religious expression encountered in already-existing religious institutions, and by the relationships of the various segments of society to those institutions.

Allan Kardec gave to The Spirits' Book the descriptive title, "Spiritualist Philosophy." J. Herculano Pires, professor of psychology and a leading Spiritist intellectual in São Paulo, has called attention to Kardec's avoidance of the term "religion" in The Spirits' Book, citing verbal statements of "The Codifier" to the effect that to call Spiritism a religion at that stage would have simply identified it in the mind of the public as another sect.[16] Pires reiterates the point that the religious aspect of the contents of The Spirits' Book is evident, but that the doctrines are of such nature that their revelation had to be held in abeyance until the dawn of the scientific era. "'Without scientific development,' asserted Kardec, 'there would not have been created in the world the climate necessary to the comprehension of Spiritism.'"[17] In these and other passages it becomes clear that in his positivistic age Kardec felt the necessity of the protecting mantle of scientism.

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[16]J. Herculano Pires, O Espírito e o Tempo, São Paulo; Editôra Pensamento, 1964, pp. 191-192. This position is generally held in Brazil today; Spiritism is not a religion, but is fundamental to all religion.

[17]Ibid., p. 66; see also pp. 75 and 143.

Kardec devotes half of the Introduction of <u>The Spirits' Book</u> to the refutation of objections to Spiritism; the first of these is "the opposition of the learned world." It is here that a paradoxical tone is set for the treatment of the subject of science in its various reappearances in the volume. The unity of knowledge, both spiritual and material, is strongly asserted:

> All the laws of nature are divine laws, since God is the author of all things. The seeker after science studies these laws of nature in the realm of matter; the seeker after goodness studies them in the soul, and practices them.[18]

But alongside the unity of Truth, the diversity of method is also affirmed in statements such as the following:

> Science...is therefore incompetent, as such, to decide the question of the truth of Spiritism; it has nothing to do with it....Spiritist belief is the result of a personal conviction.[19]

Nevertheless, the appeal to observation and reason runs throughout the book. It is Kardec's book <u>Genesis</u>, however, which has for its major theme the relationship between science on the one hand and Spiritism as a religion on the other, and affirms the unity of the two. Herculano Pires observes that Allan Kardec has added to Comte's three stages -- theological, metaphysical, and positive -- the fourth, and crowning one:

> ...the psychological phase, in which the sciences open up to the discovery and the affirmation of the psychic as a phenomenon (and no longer as merely an epiphenomenon), recognizing its autonomy and its positive reality which is verifiable, susceptible of experimental proof....Spiritism is presented as

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[18]<u>The Spirits' Book</u>, p. 271.

[19]<u>Ibid</u>., pp. 37-38.

science, because, as the master explains in Genesis,
in the first chapter: "As a method of elaboration,
Spiritism proceeds exactly in the same way as the
positive sciences, applying in the experimental
method....Until now, it was thought that this method
was only applicable to matter, whereas it applies
also to metaphysical subjects."[20]

Pires, one of the founders of the Paulista Institute for Para-
psychological Studies, a society of persons interested in psychic
phenomena, goes on to indicate that out of Kardecism came the "meta-
psychics" of Charles Richet, and the parapsychology of J. B. Rhine.

Kardec's development, in Genesis, of the mutual necessity and
complementarity of science and Spiritism is the expansion of the opening
part of the more specifically religious work, The Gospel According to
Spiritism. Spiritists believe that the immutable laws of Spiritism,
spelled out in The Spirits' Book, are the long-awaited connecting link
between material science and spiritual truth, and that they show the
intertwining of the spiritual and corporeal worlds. After eighteen
centuries of being overlaid with cumbersome forms, the real Christianity
emerges in its simplicity as the natural moral law of the universe,
capable of revolutionizing human social relations. Kardec's method for
arriving at this essential moral kernel of the second revelation -- that
which was given by Jesus -- is that of stripping away from the Four
Gospels those parts which have to do with "the ordinary acts of the life
of Christ, the miracles, the prophecies, the words which served for the
establishment of the dogmas of the Church," for these "have been the
object of controversies," while retaining the part "which has remained

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[20]Pires, op. cit., p. 155.

unassailable," the moral teachings.[21] Once again, doctrinal originality
or claims to a new revelation are deliberately eschewed. The dynamic
is that of the rediscovery and reform, not of mere doctrine, but of a
"way of life," a practicum considered all-important for this and future
existences. Candido P. F. Camargo has observed in this connection, that
"The role of the 'orientation of life' which...characterizes the
Spiritist movement, is greatly facilitated by its practical, non-
revealed nature."[22] Religion is the ethic of practical charity. For
Spiritists by the millions, "outside of charity there is no salvation"
is the supreme motto, the summing up of religion.

The Gospel According to Spiritism (O Evangelho Segundo o Espiritismo)
is also the volume which goes into greatest detail in claiming to show
the mediumistic nature of the first and second revelations in Moses and
the prophets, and in Jesus and the apostles. The use of this book
almost to the exclusion of others in hundreds of Spiritist centers
indicates that despite the truth of Camargo's statement above, charity
is not merely a calculated system of action for Spiritists, but that
the doctrinal study session is increasingly becoming a worship service,
with a mysticism of charity at its center. This is quite at variance
with the detached, philosophical approach of the Founder.

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[21]Allan Kardec, O Evangelho Segundo O Espiritismo, trans. Júlio
de Abreu, São Paulo: Editôra Pensamento, 1963, p. 11.

[22]Candido P. F. Camargo, Kardecismo e Umbanda, São Paulo:
Livraria Pioneira Editôra, 1961, p. 25.

The Challenge of J. B. Roustaing

The subjective nature of spirit-communication and the reaction

against ecclesiastical dogmatism and the "tyranny of orthodoxy" made it

inevitable that differing doctrines would arise. Even so, the practical

emphasis on the acts of charity has to a large extent overshadowed

doctrinal divergences. Within Kardec's own lifetime, however, one

dispute arose which was to have far-reaching effects in the institu-

tionalization of Spiritism in Brazil.

Jean-Baptiste Roustaing, of Lyons, published a four-volume study

called Les Quatres Évangiles, or Révelation de la Révelation. The

work, otherwise of little originality, presents the "docetic" view that

Jesus did not have a corporeal body, but that his body here on earth

was purely "fluidic," thus relieving him of the physical suffering and

limitations of ordinary humans. One circumstance militates against the

authority of such a work, among even the Spiritists, for whom it is

normal to accept as genuine the mediunically-dictated works of promi-

nent but deceased literary figures. This is the dubious circumstance

that the work is attributed to the spirits of the four Evangelists,

Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, assisted by all the other Apostles, as

a rectification of the Biblical texts which have been mutilated in their

passage through the centuries. The gathering of such a celestial edi-

torial committee is considered improbable even by many Spiritists.[23]

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[23]Isidoro Duarte Santos, Spiritist leader of Portugal, has ob-
servations of this type, speaking as an "outsider" to Brazilian
Spiritism, O Espiritismo no Brasil (Ecos de Uma Viagem), Rio de Janeiro:
J. Ozon Editor, 1961.

Nevertheless, Bezerra de Menezes, the so-called "Allan Kardec of
Brazil" and sometime president of the Federação Espírita Brasileira,
and many other illustrious figures, endorsed Roustaing's doctrine, and
since 1900 several editions of a Portuguese translation have come from
the press of the Federação.[24] Although doctrinal rifts and organi-
zational hiatuses exist as a result of this position, the breach is
bridged to some extent by the organization's having become by far the
largest publisher of the works of the Master, Allan Kardec.

Beliefs Concerning the Etiology of Illness

In Kardec's works only tangential references are made to belief in
spiritual causes of human ailments. Nevertheless, the constant preoc-
cupation with threats to health and the inadequate medical and health
services had facilitated the Brazilians' acceptance of treatment by
combinations of magic and herbs; little distinction was made among
practices inherited from old Europe, Africa, or the Amerindians. The
Kardeckian system offered a rationale for such beliefs, and even
covered them with the mantle of "science." On the other hand, healing
offered a means of expression for charity, and the healing of mind and
emotions assumed the role of assistance in the evolution of "spirits."
The belief-system with reference to healing, then, has developed and
has captured the interest of those inside and outside the movement in

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[24]In a folder of the press of the Federação Espírita Brasileira,
the book is described as "the only mediunic work in the world which
makes a complete study of all of the words, all of the miracles, all
of the passages, of all, that is, which was narrated by the four
Evangelists...in truth, a College Course in Spiritism."

Brazil in a manner apparently undreamed of by Allan Kardec. It is therefore important to note the salient features of this typically Brazilian emphasis given to a marginal aspect of Kardec's teaching.

Despite the general admission among Kardecists that certain cases demand "doctor's medicines" and surgery, the ultimate causes of all illnesses are considered to be spiritual. The following etiology of illness has been drawn from the writings of Spiritist and other commentators[25] and verified by this writer's own observations and interrogations. It will be apparent that certain of the causes overlap; for example, illnesses of a "Karmic" nature may take any of several forms.

1. <u>Karmic effects</u>. Rebellious or evil attitudes and behavior in previous existences are thought to necessitate retributive suffering and sacrifice. This may take the form of physical or mental illnesses or defects, which provide opportunity to make retribution through patient suffering, faith, and gnostic development. A picture-story in the ANUÁRIO ESPÍRITA shows how a worker, whose arm was broken in a factory accident, comes to question his ill fate. He is taken by a kindly Spiritist friend to a session; there the spirits inform him that the accident is the result of his having committed murder with that right hand in a previous incarnation.[26] Thus, although no direct

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[25]Toledo, op. cit., passim; Camargo, op. cit., pp. 99-104; Xavier, op. cit., passim; Boaventura Kloppenburg, O Espiritismo no Brasil, Petrópolis: Editôra Vozes, 1960, pp. 217-219.

[26]ANUÁRIO ESPÍRITA 1966, Araras: Instituto de Difusão Espírita, 1966, pp. 120-125.

physical cure was performed, the more important task of inner re-
conciliation was carried out. This, it was felt, would even have the
indirect effect of speeding physical recovery.

Enmity and vengeance -- universally considered in myth and legend
to be stronger than death -- are considered to be particularly apt to
bring illness and suffering through the Karmic process, since retribu-
tion must be in proportion to the wrong which was done.

2. <u>Undeveloped mediumship</u>. Many persons, in attendance at
Spiritist sessions for the first time, are attacked by muscular spasms,
convulsions, spells of screaming or fainting, or similar manifestations.
The writer has observed many such cases; and they are usually associated
with symptoms of tension or of nervous or emotional disorders. The
usual immediate prescription is: "He needs to <u>desenvolver</u> (develop his
mediunity)." Failure to "develop," particularly after the discovery
of latent mediunic capacity, is said to result in increased suffering.
It amounts to a rejection of the mission to minister to the errant
spirits which need the mediunic channel for the carrying out of their
own expiatory services, and it inhibits the reception of those services
by "incarnate spirits of the material sphere" (i.e., people now alive),
who are needy.

3. <u>Religious ignorance or negligence</u>. This is closely related,
in many cases, to the undeveloped mediunity just described. It is also
important in the conceptions of <u>Umbanda</u>, the Afro-Brazilian "white-
magic" cult.

4. <u>Possession by an ignorant or "low" spirit (often termed "ob-
sessão")</u>. This can be related to the above if an unsuspecting medium

is taken over by a spirit, without his own knowledge or even against his will. Another term commonly applied here is "perturbações," the expression "encôsto" (something which is "lodged") being the one most used among lower class people and followers of Umbanda. The effects of this phenomenon may be felt in the areas of employment, business, home life, et cetera. The term "obsessão" is applied indiscriminately to all types of abnormal and psychopathic phenomena. In both small places and large, Spiritists maintain asylums and hospitals for sufferers of such ills. The 550-bed Hospital Espírita in Porto Alegre has psychiatrists and modern equipment, but an extensive program of sessions of "desobsessão" (lit., "dis-obsession") is carried on daily. Desobsessão is also the name given to the monthly bulletin published by the hospital.

5. Anger, vengeance, and other unwholesome attitudes. The principle that "like attracts like," which is also basic to homeopathic medicine, operates here; an evil spirit joins the vindictive heart, bringing illness or even "obsession." The sentimental but rationalistic moralism which insists upon the necessity of constant thoughts of sweetness and light is central in Spiritist writings and exhortations. It perceives in negativism and hatred major sources of human ill-health. The writings of Francisco Candido Xavier and his many emulators are replete with anecdotal and homiletical applications of this common-sense psychological principle.

The Cultus of Kardec Spiritism: Religious Practices and Training

Attention is directed in the present section to the varieties of séances and to the programs conducted for the winning of new sympathizers

and the indoctrination of experienced members, youth, and children. The increasingly rigidity of institutional structure and of patterns of religious expression is noted.

Toward the Uniformity of Spiritist Practice

The first formal contact of most persons with Spiritism occurs at a sessão, or séance. Visitors are generally filled with apprehension; they expect to hear "voices" and see apparitions, possibly of the spirits of people they have known. Such expectations are rarely fulfilled; the meetings normally proceed with order and may seem dull at points. Yet the atmosphere is permeated with the expectant conviction of rapport with the unseen but stable and permanent world of the Spirits. This is the fundamental attraction of Spiritism. It also creates situations of potential danger, and requires regulation.

Such regulation is one of the major tasks of the federative institutions. The Federação Espírita Brasileira has published several works, in addition to Kardec's Book of the Mediums, with the view of establishing standards for the conduct of meetings and the activity of mediums.[27] Among its most effective publications for this purpose, however, is one which carries the prestige and the charismatic aura of Francisco Candido Xavier and his colleague, Waldo Vieira, rather than the flavor of an official pronouncement; it is entitled Mecanismos da Mediunidade (1960). The "spirit of André Luiz," believed to have dictated this book to the two mediums, is also given credit for another

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[27]Martins Peralva, Estudando a Mediunidade, n.d.; and Aurélio Valente, Sessões Práticas e Doutrinárias do Espiritismo, n.d.

publication of the Federação, Conduta Espírita (n.d.), which was "received" by Waldo Vieira. This work is relied upon heavily by the Federação Espírita do Rio Grande do Sul in its publication which establishes norms of Spiritist practice for its members.[28]

The Federação Espírita do Estado de São Paulo has made strenuous efforts to obtain some uniformity of practice among the diverse groups. In its great gray headquarters building in São Paulo, the Federação has dozens of sessions of various types each day, in which hundreds of members participate. Through the experiences thus obtained, the Federação has developed approved orders and techniques for the conduct of the sessions. These have been published as texts for use in the School for Mediums maintained by this body, and also have become the accepted manuals for use in other states. Edgard Armond is the author of some of these texts, and the descriptions presented in the present study, while also dependent upon the writer's observations and further reading, are consonant with Armond's major book on the direction of the séance and other types of sessions.[29]

Armond's presentation is somewhat pedantic and repetitious. Although he considers 10 types of meetings, three of which are for doctrinal instruction and do not involve the "reception" of spirits, the agendas for most of the varieties of sessões are similar. Thus it is

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[28]Normas para os Trabalhos Práticos e Doutrinários, Porto Alegre, 1968, 2a. ed. rev.

[29]Trabalhos Práticos de Espiritismo, São Paulo: Livraria Allan Kardec Editôra, 1954. Armond has another work, Mediunidade, for which publication data are lacking.

easily understood why most centers have, in general, two types of

meetings. One is for instruction and the preaching of the Spiritist

message, with some routine mediumistic activity. The other is for the

invocation of spirits for tasks of healing and other specific functions.[30]

In practice, as Armond himself notes, the majority of the meetings held

in Brazilian centers are "mixed sessions," involving both of these gen-

eral functions. In this manner, as the Spiritist author puts it, in a

candid and homely phrase, those present "get a little bit of everything

in a short time."

The Organization and Functioning of the Mixed Session

In small centers, the mixed session is often the principal meeting

of the week, and is attended by all members. In the larger organizations,

such as the Allan Kardec Center in Campinas or the headquarters of a

state federation, many such meetings are held by small groups in rooms

set aside for this purpose. Each group is permanent, and holds its

meetings weekly or more often.

The sessions are normally carried on by the light of day or normal

electric illumination, though in some situations and local settings

only subdued or colored lights may be used. Frequently there is a bust

or a picture of Allan Kardec; his austere aspect is appropriate to the

bare severity of the surroundings. In iconoclastic reaction to Roman

Catholic practice, there are no images or "distracting decorations." This

is also in conscious contrast to the gaudy collections of images and

ornaments on the altars and walls of centers of low spiritism. Soft

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[30]One of the principal and most strict prohibitions in the norms
and regulations is that of invoking specific spirits; those which "make

music may be played on records, but Armond reiterates the Spiritist in-
sistence that this is only for the creation of a "mood," and is not
liturgical;[31] there are no Spiritist hymns. "The thought is everything;
the form is worth nothing"; these words from the Book of the Mediums
constitute a popular saying within this movement. This extreme ex-
pression of rationalism, however, is inevitably accompanied by the
patterning and formalization of cultic behavior.

Each local center has a Spiritual Department which is the organ
responsible for the proper functioning of the sessions. The leader of
each group, however -- called the "director of the table"-- must be
selected by the board of directors of the "society" which operates the
center. At the time appointed for the meeting, the director takes his
place at a large table, usually flanked by the speaker for the day and
a "medium of incorporation." The latter is a person considered to be
capable of receiving corporately a spirit, so that it may act or speak
through the person's body. In many centers it is the custom for these
leaders to sit apart at a smaller table, so that -- without interference
from the possible presence of "heavy or perturbed spirits" -- the direc-
tor may receive inspiration and energy from "On High." (Armond adds that
in this manner the sessions gains in "dignity and efficiency because of
its better structure";[32] there are many such evidences of growing

themselves known" upon the general invocation must be accepted. This
is an attempt to avoid "personality cults" among mediums and "spirits."

[31] Armond, op. cit., p. 156.

[32] Ibid., p. 130.

hierarchical tendencies.) In any case, the large main table is sur-
rounded by the mediums and other "cooperators," while the overflow of
such persons and the outsiders who may have come occupy other seats in
the room. It should be remembered that thousands of such sessions each
year are also held in humble homes, with mediums and audience crowded
about a small dining-table.

The agenda for a session is as follows with variations according
to circumstances:[33]

1. The director invites all present to open the session with
silent concentration. This is done with bowed heads and closed eyes.

2. The director gives the opening prayer, with all in the same
reverent attitude.

3. The speaker for the day -- usually a regular member of the
group -- reads a text and gives a homily based upon it. The most
common source of such readings is O Evangelho Segundo o Espiritismo,
while the writings of Francisco Candido Xavier also are relied upon
heavily.

4. "Vibrations" are produced for the cure of sick persons not
present. This involves simple mental concentration of the part of
the audience, but often it is the preparation for the receptive state
of the mediums. This state is one in which it is believed that the
mediums' respective "guides," "protectors," or "controls," as their
customary guiding spirits are known, can be incorporated in them. It

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[33]Ibid., pp. 127 ff.

is not necessarily an unconscious state. The process of "incorporation" involves varying degrees of apparent physical and emotional effort and effects on the part of the mediums. Even during the preceding talk, a few yawning sights, groans, and weaving heads may have indicated that some "incorporation" was already in progress. In the Normas referred to above, such physical manifestations are discouraged.

5. "Passes" and vibrations are given for the cure of the sick who are present and for the "fluidification" of bottles of water brought by members and others. The passe (pronounced pah-see) is accomplished by the medium's moving his hands over the head and down parallel to the body of the consultee. The hands are maintained several inches away from the body, sometimes with the muscles tense so that there is a physical, as well as a "spiritual," or "fluidic," vibration. Usually the passe is terminated with a shaking or snapping of the fingers, for the more efficacious dismissal of harmful spiritual forces or effects. "Fluidification" refers to the impregnating of a material -- in this case, water -- with healing fluids from the incorporating spirit. The bottle of water thus becomes a vehicle by which the healing powers can be taken home and used daily by recipients and other people.

6. There may follow a period for the exercising of mediums who are "in development"; that is, those who are still in the process of developing their natural mediunic powers, or gifts. It is considered important that this be done only when experienced mediums are present, and in secret sessions; that is, with no non-members present.

7. Indoctrination is given to non-incarnate spirits which it is thought may be present, by mediums who are experienced and apt for this

work. It is considered natural that there be many more spirits present from the "invisible" than the "visible plane," and that many of these "invisible brothers" be on low levels of evolution. Such spirits must be taught and improved; their presence is often manifested in the form of illness or suffering on the part of a person present. (More details of such cases are given in the discussion of healing sessions in the following section.)

8. A message is brought by the "spiritual mentor" of the group; that is, the spirit who is considered to be their invisible leader. The message is given through a medium who has previously been selected for this part of the program and is seated with the director of the table. It usually consists of words of inspiration or moral uplift.

9. All are again asked to concentrate together, for the closing of the meeting.

10. A prayer of thanks is led by the director.

The duration of the program is rarely more than one-and-one-half hours.

As has been indicated, each of the mediunic practices included in this agenda is frequently encountered as the sole activity of a given session. Such sessions are usually closed to all except members (with the exception of persons being treated); this applies principally to sessions devoted to indoctrination of "non-incarnate spirits," to healing -- and particularly to treatment of the mentally ill -- and to the seeking of the "orientation of the spirits" in the direction of the local society. The most important and numerous are those sessions devoted to the attempt to heal body and mind, and to them we now turn.

Healing Sessions

The treatment and the cure of human ailments, both "material" (physical) and "spiritual" (including emotional disturbances and nervous disorders), is a major function of Spiritism in Brazilian life.

It is commonly accepted that most persons have their initial contacts with Spiritism because of illness, either their own or that of loved ones. The findings of the previously mentioned survey conducted by Camargo are in accord with this. Of the 580 respondents, 62.1 per cent attributed their first attendance at Spiritist sessions to the search for cures. It is worthy of note that, among those who had been frequenters of Spiritism for five years or less, the percentage of those who recall having first sought healing was 70.0.[34]

Many sessions for the exercising of the healing ministry must, of necessity, be held at the bedside of the sick, at home or in a hospital. (In the latter case, sharp controversies often arise between hospital personnel -- especially Roman Catholic "sisters" -- and Spiritist practitioners.)

Although the nature and degree of seriousness of the illness determine the particular combinations of techniques employed for the healing, the essential features of the session are the following: (1) mental concentration of those present, reinforced by the joining of hands, to form the "current", (2) spoken prayers, (3) the execution of the passe or the laying on of hands, on the site of the medulla oblongata, the

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[34]Camargo, op. cit., p. 171. Also, cf. infra, pp. 97-98.

solar plexus, or other "central part," or upon the affected part itself.
These techniques have been developed into complex patterns by specialized
teams of the Federação Espírita do Estado de São Paulo. These teams are
known as "Pasteur groups," since their guiding spirit in the science of
healing is considered to have been Louis Pasteur in a recent incarnation.

Many Spiritist physicians give their services without charge to
centers that have medical consultation as a part of their social service
program. Frequently the work of the healing session is preparatory for
or complementary to "official" medical treatment, especially surgery.[35]
It is increasingly common for the healing session, or a portion of it,
to be devoted in a somewhat routine manner to <u>passes de limpêza</u>
(cleansing passes) and to "vibrations." The purpose of these is the
removal of maleficent influences (many of which may have been suffered
without the subject's awareness) and the imparting of spiritual power
over evil forces. Many persons receive such vibrations and passes
regularly -- "like taking a bath," as some have ingenuously put it --
and even the children are brought forward to receive them. Such activi-
ties are usually accompanied by low lights, often with soft music
played on a phonograph. They become routinized, much as were the
prayer meetings once common in Protestant churches. When questioned as
to the specific function and value of such sessions, many participants
give such answers as : "It is a purification," "I feel better," "I don't
feel right without it," "I feel lighter," and "It frees me from depres-
sion." In some centers, the mediums circulate among the assemblage

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[35]Spirit surgery, and related phenomena, are treated in the
section on special mediunic phenomena.

during this period, administering passes to all; the present writer has often been the "beneficiary" of such ministrations.

As was suggested above, the treatment of a disorder is determined by what are considered to be spiritual, as well as physical, factors in its cause.[36] The various types of treatments are noted briefly in the following paragraphs.

The categories of Spiritist treatments

The treatments dispensed in the mediunic sessions vary with the type of sufferer and his illness; nevertheless, they fall generally within the following categories.

1. Prayers and passes, and -- for more powerful action of the magnetic fluids -- laying on of hands and the forming of a "current" by the joining of hands of the mediums present.

2. Religious teaching and exhortation, for both the sufferer and his tormenting spirit. One of the surprises of the neophyte -- to whom "spirits" are awesome beings -- comes upon hearing the director of the table reprehend sharply an insolent or ignorant spirit, or patiently explain to him his condition and the steps he should take concerning it. Again the emphasis upon will-power and the rationalistic basis of behavior comes to the fore; the reading of such books as the translation of Norman Vincent Peale's Power of Positive Thinking is often recommended. Cures are frequently attributed to cumulative effects of regular attendance at the sessions.

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[36] For beliefs concerning the spiritual factors in physical and other disorders, cf. supra, pp. 76-79.

3. The development of mediunic faculties, referred to above.

4. Expulsion of the perturbing spirit. This, of course, has ample precedent in the Bible, and above all in the work of Jesus Christ; for this reason, convincing persuasion can be made to Roman Catholics and Protestants to bring their sick to the center for treatment. Often persuasion of the evil spirit, rather than expulsion, is the remedy; it is believed that the consulting discarnate spirit, which acts through the medium, or one of the "incarnate" Spiritists can employ sympathy and low-key argumentation to induce the ignorant or guilty spirit to depart. Or, a more developed spirit must expel the perturber. Certain rebellious spirits, however, are of such violence that the more refined beings of the Kardecist level can have no effect. In such cases, even against the admonitions of the Kardecists, the sufferer frequently takes his woe to the tendas of Umbanda. New and inexperienced mediums are constantly warned against the dangers of attempting to "develop" or attempting any mediunic activity except in the company of more experienced mediums. Otherwise, they are subject, at any moment in such efforts, to the unwitting "incorporation" of some inferior spirit, which may do great damage to them and those related to them.

5. Homeopathic medicines and treatments. The alleged superiority and efficaciousness of such medications are considered to be due to their being products of Nature.

6. "Spiritual surgical operations," such as those performed by mediums of special gifts.

7. Spiritist treatments given as supplements to "official," or formal medicine. These are usually passes, use of "fluidificated" water, et cetera.

The healing practices are thus integrally related to the mediunic phenomena and to the religious beliefs and activities. Even so, some programs are given over entirely to doctrinal instruction and persuasion, and to these we now turn.

Classes for Instruction in Doctrine

Doctrinal teaching is of two kinds: the first is called, as in the churches, "a pregação do Evangelho" ("the preaching of the Gospel") and refers principally to the presentation of the religious message of Spiritism to non-believers; the second is "doutrinação" ("indoctrination") and signifies doctrinal instruction of any kind.

For adults

The following is patterned on the announcements circulated in the city of Campinas, describing the types of activities under consideration here, within the context of other phases of the program of the "Allan Kardec" society. These meetings are typical of thousands which occur in Brazilian towns and cities each week.

Spiritism

Irmã Serafina Street, 674

Today, from 14:00 to 16:00 hours: passes, vibrations and ministry to the sick, and doctrinal teachings; from 19:40 to 21:00 hours, passes followed by doctrinal teachings and development of mediums (School of Mediums).

A study on Reincarnation, under three aspects: Scientific, Philosophical, and Evangelical. The classes will be held on Saturdays at 20:00 hours, the second being given on the 2nd of October, by Sr. Afonso Ubinha. Admission is open to all, in order that interested persons may become informed about one of the fundamental principles of Spiritist doctrine.

Commemorating the date of the birth of the codifier of Spiritist doctrine, this Center will hold a solemn session on the 3rd of October, at 10:00 hours. The program

consists of a talk by Dr. Lauro Gonçalves and an
artistic part under the responsibility of the "Allan
Kardec" Spiritist Youth. All are invited.

Fraternal Evening

The Municipal Spiritist Union and the Spiritist
Youth groups announce that the next "Fraternal Even-
ing" will be held at the "Allan Kardec" Spiritist
Center, Irma Serafina Street, 674, on next Sunday, at
20:00 hours. The speaker's tribunal will be occupied
by the widely acclaimed speaker, Dr. Wilson Vieira de
Mello.

For youths

Organizations of young people from about ages 15 to 30, such as

those mentioned in the above-cited announcement, follow closely the

patterns set by the corresponding groups of the Protestant churches.

Usually under the guidance of an adult counselor, they meet weekly for

studies of doctrine very similar to those held by the adults. They are

not usually as successful as the Protestant groups in obtaining the

visits of "outsiders," except in the case of youth who are in schools,

orphanages, or other institutions maintained by the centers. There-

fore, the content of the studies is rarely prepared with neophytes in

mind. An important activity, through which the youth often attempt to

reach their "outside" peers, is the editing and publishing of small

newspapers and journals; these and the social activities of the youth

groups are further examined from other points of view in Chapter V.

For children

The instruction of children, too, follows the lead, to some extent,

of the Protestant denominations. The writer has visited "Sunday School"

classes of children who sang "Jesus Loves Me," and who were shown Bible

film-strips produced (with English titles) by Protestant-oriented

organizations in the United States. In recent years, slides, films,

records, and other audio-visual materials have been developed by Spiritists. The numerous local and regional journals carry frequent articles on the "orientation" and education of children, as well as announcements of meetings of Spiritist educators. Even so, much of what is said and written is more hortatory than pedagogical in nature, and the educational process is antiquated. The material remains largely within the extremes of heavy, doctrinaire teaching on the one hand, and the "Peter Rabbit" and fairy story level, on the other.[37] It can be said that in general Spiritism does not see in the children the evangelistic opportunity which is seen by the Protestants. Most of the children in Spiritist "Sunday Schools" are those of the members. For this reason, since large numbers of centers have few young couples, many of such centers do not have an educational program for small children. Where there are orphanages, the children are given religious instruction or, in some cases, allowed to receive Roman Catholic or Protestant instruction. This latter occurs principally when such instruction is available in the public schools.

The Practice of Charity

"Outside of charity there is no salvation."[38] This statement is

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[37] The ubiquitous writings of Francisco Candido Xavier appear also on this level. Nearly a dozen books, "for children from those with their first teeth to those with false teeth," have come from his mediunic pen. Some of them are grim fairy tales, and nearly all end with the moral, "Be good." They comprise almost the entire range of the Federação's catalog of children's literature.

[38] Allan Kardec, O Evangelho Segundo o Espiritismo, São Paulo: Editôra Pensamento, 1963, Ch. 15, "Fora da Caridade não Há Salvação," paragraph 10, with same title. The early part of the chapter is a refutation of Tertullian's dictum, "Outside the Church there is no

constantly present, in Spiritist publications, on the walls of session-rooms, and even as the name of some centers. Elsewhere in this study we speak of the organizational and other social aspects of the extensive program of good works carried on by Brazilian Spiritists; here we indicate the relation of the teaching concerning charity, the impulse, and the acts of humanitarian service to the remaining components of the cultus.

The doctrinal basis for the important place of the practical expression of Christian love (particularly to those less fortunate materially) has been set forth in the teachings of the Codifier. (Cf. supra, p. 64). An important negative factor which is related to the emphasis upon charity has been the repudiation by Spiritists of the ritualism and the dogma of the churches. They decry the "formalism without charity "of the "established religions." Typical of the descriptions of their own religion which have been given by adherents, are phrases such as: "Truth without dogmatism," "an act of purity," "an abstract society -- a Way to be learned," "religion with God and primitive Christianity," "it is a true doctrine without rituals, where we may feel Jesus in our hearts."[39] Ideally, and, as we later observe in detail, often in practice, the major channel for religious expression is charitable activity, both individual and institutional.

The practice of humanitarian love is considered to be the key to Karmic retribution for the past and evolution toward perfection. The

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salvation," and what is termed its corollary, "Outside the truth there is no salvation."

[39]From interviews, carried out by the writer.

programs of charitable works are examined in the section on institutions and activities.

The Cultus and the Internalization of Institutional Norms

"The thought is everything; the form is nothing." These words, referred to in other contexts, indicate the importance attached by institutionalized Spiritism to "the knowledge of the true doctrine" and therefore to the activities related to doctrinal study.

This observation appears to receive corroboration from results of the survey by Camargo in São Paulo. Length of experience as a member of this society appears to be directly related to preference for the doctrinal aspects of the movement. It was noted in connection with the healing activities that 70 per cent of Camargo's respondents with five years experience or less gave illness as their motive for seeking help in Spiritism. Among those who had been participants for over five years, only 58.5 per cent gave this answer.[40]

When questioned as to their preferences between meetings devoted to study and mediumistic sessions, slightly over 48 per cent of each group, the "older" and the "newer," indicated a preference for study meetings. However, only 6.5 per cent of the former -- the veterans of five years or more -- expressed a preference for mediumistic sessions, as over against 26.7 per cent of the latter, newer, group. (The remainder showed no preference.)[41]

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[40]Op. cit., p. 171.

[41]Ibid., p. 172.

Camargo has pointed out the significance of the fact that even though such large proportions of the membership were attracted to Spiritist centers by the hope of cures, at a later time 53.2 per cent of his respondents named "the intellectual function" as one of their three principal reasons for actually joining a society. "Illness," named as one of the three reasons by 20.9 per cent, and "pain, suffering, disturbance, or anguish," cited by 21.1 per cent, even when considered as one general category of personal suffering, were major motivating elements for only 42.0 per cent of these persons. "Manifestation of mediunic phenomena" was mentioned by only 10.9 per cent of this sample of Paulista Spiritists. Camargo concludes:

> Everything -- especially the analysis of the typical paradigm of conversion -- leads us to believe that many of the faithful tend, after some time has passed, to forget their initial motives of conversion, being inclined to accept the religious experience on the terms ideally established by the institutions.
>
> The intellectual functions and the capacity to reorganize and orient their lives assume the dominant role in the Spiritist religious "life style."[42]

The Allan Kardec Center in Campinas, some of whose members were interrogated by the writer, is an old center in a smaller city, the population of which is less mobile than that of the state capital. Several families have members of three generations who belong to the center. Eleven, or 14 per cent of the 75 respondents, were young people who attributed their adherence to their having been reared in Spiritist homes. Over a period of many years, the center has

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[42]Ibid., p. 169.

developed a corps of highly-trained doctrinal instructors and a large

educational and social service program. For these reasons, and for

others related to characteristics of the smaller cities which are con-

sidered in Chapter VII, it was expected that initial contacts with

Spiritism in Campinas would be less related to illness and acute

suffering than in São Paulo. This was consistent with the percentages

of those giving the following reasons for initial contacts with

Spiritism:

Illness................................	25 per cent
Intellectual-religious problems.......	28 per cent
Followed family.......................	16 per cent
Curiosity.............................	13 per cent
Unspecified...........................	18 per cent
Total.................................	100 per cent

Independently of the presentation of Camargo, the present writer

had observed an even more pronounced division by age between the group

of respondents who gave as their initial motivation "Illness" and

"intellectual-religious problems." This difference was linked to

length of time as a Spiritist. It is indicated in Table 1.

Table 1.--Proportions of Those Who Were Both Over 30 Years of
Age and Spiritists for 10 Years of More, in Sample
of Allan Kardec Center, Campinas

Age, and Experience in Spiritism	Reason for First Attending	
	Illness	Intellectual-Religious Problem
	Per cent	Per cent
Over 30 and 10 years as Spiritist	68	85
Under 30 and less than 10 years	32	15

In addition, when the respondents in Campinas were asked to name the three sectors of Spiritist activity in which they preferred to participate, preferences expressed for the four major sectors were as follows:

Doctrinal studies.............. 73 per cent
Charitable works............... 72 per cent
Séances........................ 63 per cent
Fraternization................. 57 per cent

Thirty-four, or 45 per cent, also indicated that they "liked all types of activities" engaged in at the center.

Such findings concur with Camargo's thesis, given above, concerning the internalization of norms and behavior patterns of a rationalistic nature, which are held up as ideals by the institution. Even so, further research is necessary to determine to what extent such evidence indicates the internalization of relatively stable norms, or to what extent it may reflect changes which are being brought about in the goals, norms, and functions of the institution itself, in the face of changing social conditions and felt needs of prospective adherents.

Social Groups in Brazilian Spiritism

A major function of local Spiritist centers is to provide group associations and activities for its members and sympathizers.

A social group may be defined as two or more persons in social interaction who have a feeling of solidarity among themselves.[43] Group experience is a fundamental human need, and in this time of changing and disintegrating institutions and groups, one hears

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[43] T. Lynn Smith, Sociology of Rural Life, 3rd ed., New York: Harper and Brothers, 1953, pp. 363-369.

Brazilians complain of the falta de solidariedade, the "lack of solidarity." The household has always been the distinctive unit of group life in Brazilian society, and often it has included members of widely extended families. Indeed, these households were commonly linked by family ties to others nearby. Such a household was able to carry out or participate in most of the societal functions. In Chapter VII are indicated some of the changes which have curtailed the effectiveness of the household group.

Brazilian society has not produced the proliferation of social, civic, and other interest groups which typifies our own society. Social groups outside the home have been relatively few, especially for women. A large portion of those which have existed are related to the Roman Catholic parishes and have devotional functions. Relatively few people actively participate in and support them. Spiritism extends the offer of a ministry to people in the area of their specific, felt social needs, within the intimate local groups which it forms. We turn now to the consideration of the composition, structure, and functions of these social groups.

The Composition of Local Spiritist Groups

It is already apparent from earlier statements that adherents of Spiritism are largely drawn from the middle class and the upper fringes of the lower class. We also have seen that for instructional purposes there are groups divided according to age. We are interested here, however, in the composition of the small groups of adults which meet regularly for sessions, both doctrinal and mediunic.

The single most striking feature of the make-up of these groups is the high proportion of women in them. Membership statistics are almost non-existent; nevertheless, the writer has observed on many occasions that by actual count the number of women in attendance at meetings was higher than that of the men. For example, in 1966, the writer completed 75 interview schedules with Spiritists in Campinas. Those interviewed consisted of all persons attending these meetings, one meeting each for three different groups. Of these respondents, 49 were women and 26, men -- a ratio of almost two to one. Many men study Spiritist doctrine by themselves, reading the works of Kardec, Pietro Ubaldi, and Chico Xavier. This is rare among women; their participation is almost always within the group. For many women, participation in Spiritism is more than mere escape from isolation; this is the group in which they can place personal trust. The roving husband and the treacherous female friend, deceiving the wife, are a common theme in Brazilian society's image of itself. Most middle-class and upper-class women have few friends, and, with the diminishing size of the Brazilian household, they find themselves with few significant others from whom they may receive affective support. Many, therefore, find social integration and expression in the group activities of Spiritism. This association has the further advantage of being identified with the religious ideal, representing the highest and best in life. Moreover, within the egalitarian ethos of the Spiritist group, a woman of intelligence has opportunities for leadership which are still denied to her in most areas of Brazilian culture. Women of masculine aggressiveness and appearance also compose a common type found in Spiritist centers.

On the basis of data available at present, it is difficult to isolate specific personality or behavioral variables which might be of higher incidence among Spiritists than among other groups in the population. The popular notion that the mentally ill are over-represented in Spiritist groups has been treated, and it was noted that statistical data on this question are lacking. Nevertheless, new and heterodox movements of this type inevitably attract some persons who deviate from certain norms of the society. Two particular types of men are found with great frequency in Spiritist ranks, and their presence offers some clues as to certain functions of the groups.

One of these types is particularly in evidence both in the meetings and through the communications published in the numerous local Spiritist periodicals and newspaper columns. This type exhibits certain qualities once requisite for recognition as a man of culture in Brazil: an eloquent flow of words, and a capacity to expound at will on almost any theme, studding the discourse with flowery phrases and historical references. The presence of a large proportion of such persons, particularly in positions of importance, is significant for the activities of local groups and for the general directions in which Spiritism will move. In Brazilian society today, such persons -- although they may enjoy local respect and even prestige -- are often among those of low vertical social mobility; some are being forced downward slowly from the high statuses held by their fathers. They are interested in the maintenance of the status quo. They may participate in the center's social "repair work," helping those whom they consider inferior or "less fortunate," but they tend to prefer the task of

directing the doctrinal studies. They envision little in the way of social engineering; they are not risk-takers.

The second type appears to be, at first glance, the opposite of the one just described. This is the type of the practical man. It, also, is a deviant type, even in modern Brazil, for it includes those who are often more interested in machines and techniques than in the niceties of personal relationships. Such men like mechanical things and enjoy working with their hands, despite the stigma still attached to manual labor in their society. Many of them are amateur radio operators. Men with such interests are often at the practical heart of the charitable works of the Spiritist centers. Technologically, they are innovators. Sociologically, they, like their eloquent confréres, have their vision restricted principally to individuals and their immediate conditions. Many of them are rising within the middle-class, as their types of technological or bureaucratic employment gain in status. Their social and political conservatism is of a piece with the activities and teachings of their Spiritist group.

The groups which hold their meetings during the day-light hours are naturally composed almost altogether of persons not regularly employed. These include a relatively large proportion of older people, spinsters, and widows. There are also such persons as women whose husbands are not Spiritists, and who cannot attend such meetings in the evenings. Day-time groups include relatively few lower-class persons. The groups which meet in the evenings are more heterogeneous; they include persons of a broader span of ages, occupations, and social statuses. There are more family groups in the evening, and it is in the company of these that many outsiders attend for the first time, often in search of cures.

As might be expected, there are also groups which meet in the private homes of the well-to-do. Many Spiritists who are themselves of high social status would nevertheless have great difficulty in persuading friends to accompany them to a center. The writer has been personally acquainted with such situations, in some of which well-known, "powerful" mediums were used in order arouse interest and attract the invited persons. The first experiences of many people with Spiritism occur in domestic séances.

The Structure of Local Spiritist Groups

The basic unit of Spiritism is the local center. In keeping with the general norms of the movement, the structure of the center is characterized by simplicity, voluntarism, and personalism. Camargo has pointed out the democratic nature of the Spiritist group as representing a value of the socially mobile urbanites who reject the traditional organization of society.[44] Even so, there are certain limits to this egalitarianism, as is suggested below.

In the Book of the Mediums Allan Kardec presents a suggested constitution for local centers. It is adapted for use by many centers, with two principal types of changes. These represent two major adaptations of Kardecism to the Brazilian milieu, adaptations to which the success of the movement is largely due. In the first place, the Brazilian centers have removed most of the restrictions upon public attendance at the séances, thus making the healing function more accessible to the people; and in the second place, they provide for a

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[44]Camargo, op. cit., p. 117.

pronounced religious atmosphere and orientation in both the healing and the doctrinal aspects of the meetings.

A board of directors and its officers are elected by the members, and this body meets monthly to carry out the routine business of the center. There are no salaried officers, and, of course, no paid clergy. Occasionally, and especially in small places or in lower-class neighborhoods, the meeting-hall is in the house or on the property of the leading member. He may have been the founder of the center, and is frequently referred to, by members and townspeople alike, as its "dono" (owner). (Some such arrangement is extremely common in the case of Umbanda and other low types of Spiritism.)

Centers or their agencies which wish to receive public funds for their programs of education and charity must go through the legal process of being declared "of public utility" in order to enjoy this privilege. The designation also carries a modicum of prestige. It indicates that the organization has members or friends in high places. Additional prestige and financial support is sometimes secured by enrolling persons of prestige as members of the board of directors of a center or its chartered agency of charity. Such persons are often believers, such as those referred to above, who do not find it convenient to associate themselves with the ordinary activities of the center, but who can appear as patrons. In such quasi-political areas, Spiritism shows a moral continuity with the larger society and its norms, which Protestantism often refuses to share. Following separatist norms, the latter disengages itself from much of the culture, emphasizing the gap which exists between itself and "the world."

The general formal structure of the center is thus seen to be very simple. Only in the case of a large center with several hundred members and many institutions and service projects, such as the Allan Kardec Center in Campinas, are there any paid employees and more complex organization. Even in those, much routine work is done by volunteers.

Most of the cultic activity, involving interaction among members, goes on in the smaller groups. These are normally composed of from five to 15 people. Leadership here is normally associated with any or all of three elements: mediumship, intellectual capacity, and social status. In most Kardeckian centers the rationalistic emphasis upon self-control and self-development, doctrinal gnosis, and the ethic of charity minimizes internal struggles for control. In addition, leadership qualities are usually fairly well distributed among a number of individuals. Even so, there are situations similar to that which is normal in Umbanda groups; that is, domination by a medium of powerful personality.

Within a situation in which expectations are high, concerning the wisdom and directive powers of the medium's "guiding spirit," a perceptive medium can exercise control over many people, and mediums are not elected. There are several built-in checks against abuse of such power. Teachings and behavior of the spirits must be in accord with accepted Kardeckian doctrine; thus there is less opportunity for rampant subjectivism and arbitrary fiat than is imagined by outside critics. Moreover, the "director of the table" is usually an experienced leader. He may be a medium, but does not function as one while presiding. A major function of his role -- apparent to the outside

observer as latent on some occasions and manifest on others -- is
to act as a check against excesses. In view of these webs of subtle and
overt interaction, it is understandable that "relações humanas" ("human
relations") should be a popular subject in Spiritist literature and
lectures.

The local group, despite its simple general structure, thus em-
bodies intricate patterns of human interaction. We shall note briefly
the major functions of these structures and processes.

The Functions of the Local Spiritist Group

The structure, activities, and interaction of the groups under
study are functional for their adherents in a variety of ways. We
indicate here those which are of major importance.

1. The most manifest of these is the therapeutic function.

2. Participation in the group provides social identification for
large numbers of people. This function appears to be linked to the first;
the continuation of many as members of the group after they have felt
that they were healed indicates that in some of these cases isolation
and illness may be linked to each other.

3. Many individuals find in Spiritism a satisfactory mode of
religious expression and participation. The participation of laymen in
leadership activities, both in the cultus and in decision-making, is
important here. The religious fellowship in the liturgy and the social
interaction and responsibility in the organizational aspects of the group
constitute a large part of that which has been lacking for many in the
Roman Catholic Church. Despite the paucity of data, observation and
personal interviews have led the researcher to the conclusion that among

those for whom this function is most pronounced are families which have been Spiritist for more than one generation. The socialization of the children is focused more upon the moral-religious than the phenomeno-logical aspects of doctrine and practice.

4. The group provides mechanisms for the rationalization, and sometimes the resolution, of conflicts, within personalities and between individuals and groups. One of the most efficient of such mechanisms is that of "spirit-incorporation," by means of which conflicts may be carried on indirectly, through the substitute identities of the "guiding spirits" who are believed to be present. It is often easier to argue with, reprehend, or vent hostilities upon one of the "brothers from the invisible plane" than to face a fellow-member in the same way.

5. The social integration of many individuals who are mentally or emotionally disturbed is facilitated by the group's natural acceptance of them. In some cases, it might even be said that a "premium" is put upon these abnormalities, when they appear to be associated with mediumship.

6. There are sources of prestige in the intellectual, mediunic, and charitable activities. Particularly in the case of efficacious mediums, such prestige may be felt even in the surrounding society.

Attention is directed here to the relationships between local Spiritist centers and the tendas of Umbanda, to which reference is also made elsewhere, in a larger context.[45] As more and more people are diverted to the greater dynamism of the sessions at the tendas, there

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[45](supra) p. 90.

is an increasing tendency of certain local Spiritist centers to adopt some of the external features of the other cult: more ritualism, the use of white clothing, rhythmical music, et cetera. Tensions are produced by these departures from orthodoxy both within the center and between it and the federative groups. Even so, a serious attempt is being made in many centers to "keep the faith" and, at the same time, maintain or introduce the healing and social functions of the group. This is considered necessary for reaching the lower classes, and often for the survival of the center.

It should not be forgotten that, in the case of failure or illusory success in the performance of one of these functions, the latter often becomes dysfunctional. An example of this is the occasional aggravation, rather than cure, of a mental or physical disorder after treatment at the center. It was indicated previously that the effects of mediumistic activities, or of interaction with mediums, and of other Spiritist group behavior, are the subject of debate in the professions of medicine and psychology. As happens with reference to other social movements, the behavior and the social processes which function positively to integrate an individual in the Spiritist group frequently have the effect of isolating him from the outer society, and even from other significant in-groups, such as the family. Integration into the new group may well be considered by the individual to be worth the price.

In summary, one of the keys to the spread and acceptance of this movement, as of many others, has been the purposeful or fortuitous development of small and often intricate groups in which adherents find

meaningful participation and emotional support. Such groups are effective cells of indoctrination; they are well-adapted to the peculiarities of the séance; and they provide stimulus and channels for the charitable projects of the center.

CHAPTER V

ADHERENTS, ORGANIZATIONS, AND ACTIVITIES OF SPIRITISM

The present chapter is devoted to three basic aspects of the
Spiritist movement in Brazil; namely, its membership and following,
its organizational and institutional aspects, and its activities in
relation to the larger society of which it is a part.

The Adherents of Spiritism

Despite the lack of adequate statistical data, there is much
that can be observed and inferred with regard to the members and
sympathizers of Spiritist organizations, as concerns their numbers,
geographical distribution, and composition.

Numbers

No one can say with any certainty how many Brazilians are
Spiritists; yet it is generally conceded that their numbers run into
the millions and that their influence extends far beyond those in-
cluded in formal membership. Conservative estimates indicate that be-
tween two and three million persons are members of local centers.[1]

Although the official census data on religious affiliation are
very imperfect, and the latest such data available are from the 1950

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[1] Cf. Donald Warren, Jr., "Spiritism in Brazil," Journal of Inter-
American Studies, Vol. 10, no. 3 (July, 1968), pp. 393-394. Candido
P.F. Camargo also observes that Spiritists are greatly under-enumerated
in the official census reports, Kardecismo e Umbanda, São Paulo:
Livraria Pioneira Editôra, 1961, pp. xi, xix.

census, nevertheless they are very useful, in the light of other knowl-
edge, in indicating the extent of Spiritism in the country as a whole.
They are particularly helpful in showing its relative strength in
various parts of the national territory.[2] Figures for the nation and
the states are presented in Table 2.

The 1950 census reported 824,553 Spiritists in Brazil; the number
given in 1940 was 463,000. In the decade of 1940-1950, while the
population of the country as a whole increased by 25.1 per cent, the
reported increase of Spiritists was 78 per cent. It is possible that
a part of this increase is due to improved techniques of data-
gathering in the 1950 census, and to the greater willingness of
persons to declare themselves Spiritists in 1950. Even so, the
Spiritist movement has grown rapidly, as is evident in the sections
which deal with the institutions and activities of the movement.

Geographical distribution

Spiritism is largely concentrated in the areas of greatest urban
development, as is indicated in Tables 2 and 3. The five states of
Minas Gerais, Rio de Janeiro, Federal District, São Paulo, and Rio
Grande de Sul, with 49.9 per cent of the national population, had 80.1

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[2]The latest report on Spiritism of the official body for the taking
of the census in Brazil is Estatística do Culto Espírita do Brasil,
1961, Rio de Janeiro: Conselho Nacional de Estatística, 1964. The
data for this report were derived from the XXVI Statistical Campaign of
1961, and lack by far the completeness of a full census. Data are given
for only 883 of the 1,575 municípios in Brazil. Sixty-nine of the 369
municípios in São Paulo were omitted. The writer checked 23 of these,
selected at random, and found that in the 1950 census, 3,241 Spiritists
had been reported as residing in them. It is evident, also, that many
Spiritist centers were omitted in the municípios reported on. While
this report contains some information of value for our study, we base
our statistical analysis upon the sixth Brazilian census, of 1950.

Table 2.--Spiritists in the Population of Brazil by States, 1950.

State or Territory	Total Population	Number of Spiritists	Per cent of Total Population
BRAZIL	51,944,397	824,553	1.60
Guaporé	36,935	63	.16
Acre	114,755	184	.16
Amazonas	514,099	1,626	.32
Rio Branco	18,116	38	.21
Pará	1,123,273	2,847	.25
Amapá	37,477	41	.11
Maranhão	1,583,248	2,017	.13
Piauí	1,045,696	507	.05
Ceará	2,695,450	5,903	.22
Rio Grande do Norte	967,921	1,744	.18
Paraíba	1,713,259	2,691	.16
Pernambuco	3,395,185	19,237	.57
Alagoas	1,093,037	2,169	.20
Sergipe	644,361	2,184	.34
Bahia	4,834,575	12,458	.26
Minas Gerais	7,877,866	113,920	1.47
Serra dos Aimorés (disputed by Minas Gerais and Espirito Santo)	160,072	1,267	.75
Rio de Janeiro	2,297,194	64,501	2.81
Federal District	2,377,451	123,775	5.21
São Paulo	9,134,423	242,942	2.66
Paraná	2,115,547	26,230	1.25
Santa Catarina	1,560,502	7,537	.48
Rio Grande do Sul	4,164,821	115,552	2.77
Mato Grosso	522,044	12,594	2.41
Goiás	1,214,921	44,198	3.64

SOURCE: Compiled and computed from data in "Censo Demográfico," VI Recenseamento Geral do Brasil, 1950, Rio de Janeiro: Conselho Nacional de Estatística, 1956.

Table 3.—Spiritists in the Municípios of the Capitals of States and in the Remaining Municípios of Each State

Capital and State or Territory	Município of Capital			Remaining Municípios			Per cent of Spiritists Residing in M. of Capital
	Total Population	Spiritists Number	Per cent	Total Population	Spiritists Number	Per cent	
Porto Velho (Guaporé)	27,244	38	.01	12,691	25	.20	60.3
Rio Branco (Acre)	28,246	67	.02	86,509	117	.13	36.4
Manaus (Amazonas)	139,620	1,178	.84	374,479	448	.13	72.4
Boa Vista (Rio Branco)	17,247	38	.02	869	--	--	100.0
Belém (Pará)	254,949	2,316	.09	869,193	531	.06	81.3
Macapá (Amapá)	20,594	22	.01	16,883	19	.06	77.4
São Luíz (Maranhão)	119,785	609	.05	1,463,463	1,408	.10	28.8
Teresina (Piauí)	90,723	260	.03	954,973	247	.25	51.3
Fortaleza (Ceará)	250,169	4,699	1.9	2,445,281	1,202	.05	79.6
Natal (Rio Grande do Norte)	103,215	1,161	1.1	864,706	583	.07	66.6
João Pessoa (Paraíba)	119,326	1,545	1.3	1,595,323	1,146	.06	91.4
Recife (Pernambuco)	524,682	13,711	2.6	2,870,503	5,526	.21	71.6
Maceió (Alagoas)	120,980	1,572	1.3	972,057	597	.06	72.5
Aracaju (Sergipe)	78,544	1,502	1.9	565,817	682	.12	68.8

Table 3.--(cont)

Capital and State or Territory	Município of Capital			Remaining Municípios			Per cent of Spirit- ists Resid- ing in M. of Capital
	Total Population	Spiritists Number	Per cent	Total Population	Spiritists Number	Per cent	
Salvador (Bahia)	417,235	5,129	1.2	4,417.340	7,329	.17	41.2
Belo Horizonte (Minas Gerais)	352,724	14,032	4.0	7,525,142	199,888	1.30	12.3
Vitória (Espírito Santo)	50,922	1,435	2.8	810,640	16,861	2.20	7.8
Niterói (Rio de Janeiro)	186,309	9,406	5.0	2,110,885	55,905	2.60	14.6
Federal District	2,377,451	123,775	5.2	--	--	--	--
São Paulo (S.P.)	2,198,096	71,638	3.3	6,936,247	171,334	2.50	29.5
Curitiba (Paraná)	180,575	4,828	2.7	1,934,972	21,402	1.1	18.4
Florianópolis (Santa Catarina)	67,630	3,701	4.4	1,492,872	3,836	.26	49.1
Pôrto Alegre (Rio Grande do Sul)	394,151	25,664	6.5	3,770,670	89,908	2.4	22.2
Cuiabá (Mato Grosso)	56,204	1,456	2.6	465,840	11,138	2.4	11.6
Goiânia (Goiás)	53,289	3,524	6.6	1,161,532	40,674	3.5	7.8
Total	8,230,080	292,268	3.5	43,714,317	529,978	1.2	35.4

SOURCE: Compiled and computed from data in "Censo Demográfico," VI Recenseamento Geral do Brasil, 1950, Rio de Janeiro: Conselho Nacional de Estatística, 1956.

per cent of the Spiritists. In all but two of the most rural states, the Spiritist population was heavily concentrated in the município containing the state capital, and in one of these states, Mato Grosso, one-half of the more than 12,000 Spiritists were concentrated in the three cities of Cuiabá, Campo Grande, and Corumbá. In this state, with 75 municípios, 50 municípios reported no Spiritists at all, and in each of 26 municípios, fewer than 10 Spiritists were reported. In the state of São Paulo, on the other hand, there were no municípios without followers of Kardec.

The municípios of the capitals contained 15.9 per cent of Brazil's population in 1950, but they accounted for 35.4 per cent of the Spiritists. These latter comprised 3.5 per cent of the population of the municípios referred to, although on the national level, only 1.6 per cent of the population consisted of Spiritists. In the metropolitan area composed of the nation's capital, Rio de Janeiro, and its suburban municípios in the state of Rio de Janeiro, there was reported a total population of 3,516,469, of which 152,990 (or 4.4 per cent) were Spiritists. In the São Paulo metropolitan area, with a population of slightly more than three million, there were 74,699 (or 3.4 per cent) Spiritists. These two metropolitan centers alone accounted for 26.4 per cent of Kardecists in Brazil. The proportion of Spiritists in the population of Rio was nearly three times that reported for the nation as a whole, while that of São Paulo was more than twice the national percentage.

Outside of the capitals of states, the municípios in which the largest numbers of Spiritists were reported are those in Table 3.

Table 4.--Municípios not State Capitals with Largest Numbers of Spiritists

	Município	Total Population	Spiritists Number	Per cent
1.	Uberaba, Minas Gerais	69,434	9,156	13.2
2.	Alegre, Espírito Sto.	58,968	5,821	9.9
3.	Uberlândia, Minas G.	54,984	5,745	10.4
4.	Campinas, São Paulo	152,547	5,581	3.7
5.	Santos, São Paulo	203,562	5,504	2.7
6.	Ribeirão Preto, S.P.	92,160	5,364	5.8
7.	Bauru, São Paulo	65,452	4,319	6.6
8.	Sorocaba, São Paulo	93,928	3,941	4.2

SOURCE: Compiled and computed from data in "Censo Demográfico,"
VI Recenseamento Geral do Brasil, 1950, Rio de Janeiro: Conselho
Nacional de Estatística, 1956.

Five of these cities are in the State of São Paulo, and have
participated in the rapid urbanization and industrialization of that
state. All of them are also transportation centers, with relatively
high rates of employment in the administrative bureaucracies of the
railroads and other governmental enterprises.

Uberaba and Uberlândia are included in a group of eight municípios,
located relatively near to one another in the triangular southwestern
portion of Minas Gerais, in which there is an unusually high incidence
of Spiritist membership reported in the 1950 census. These eight
localities, with a combined population of 267,790, reported 27,871
Spiritists, or 10.4 per cent of the total of inhabitants; that is,
these combined municípios, with 3.4 per cent of the population of
Minas Gerais, included 24.4 per cent of the Spiritists of the state.
Moreover, several nearby municípios in the bordering states of Goiás
and São Paulo also had relatively high proportions of Spiritists in
the population as reported by the census. A similar situation exists
with regard to Alegre, in the state of Espírito Santo, which reported
a much larger Kardecist membership than did Vitoria, the state capital,
and which also has several neighboring localities with high indices
of Spiritism. All of these places are highly rural. In some, such
as Ituiutaba in Minas Gerais, the seat of the município has only 15
per cent of the people, while more than 80 per cent are in the rural
zone. In most of them, rates of illiteracy run above 60 per cent.[3]

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[3]The towns in the two rural areas under discussion here, and
the sources of information concerning them, are the following: in
the state of Espírito Santo, Alegre and the Zona Serrana do Sul,

Yet the "Triangle of Minas" is well-known as a redoubt of Spiritism; Uberaba is the home of Candido Francisco Xavier, the leading Spiritist medium and writer, and from this region have come some of Brazil's most famous thaumaturgs. Palmelo, nearby in Goiás, has about 1,500 people, all Spiritists. While in both of these regions Roman Catholicism is taken seriously, and some of the traditional feast-days and pageantry, fast disappearing in other places, are still faithfully observed, these are also two regions in which Protestantism is relatively strong, according to the 1950 census.

Kardecism is often treated as a metropolitan phenomenon,[4] and the reports cited here demonstrate a high concentration of it in the large urban centers. Nevertheless, it must be noted, for example, that the seat of every município in the states of São Paulo and Minas Gerais, including even relatively backward trading centers of far-flung agro-pastoral areas, has at least one small Spiritist group. As is indicated more fully in a subsequent chapter, the appeals and functions of Spiritism in the small urban places appear to vary from those it displays in large metropolitan areas.

Enciclopédia dos Municípios Brasileiros, Rio de Janeiro: Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística, 1959, Vol. XXII, pp. 21 ff.; in the state of Minas Gerais, Frutal, ibid., Vol. XXV, pp. 145 ff.; Ituiutaba, ibid., pp. 304 ff.; Sacramento, ibid., Vol. XXVII, pp. 105 ff.; Tupaciguara, ibid., pp. 382 ff.; Uberaba, ibid., pp. 394 ff.; Uberlândia, ibid., pp. 400 ff. (Póços de Caldas and Veríssimo were not investigated as to per cent rural-urban literacy, et cetera, although they are included in the eight urban centers mentioned above.)

[4]Donald Warren, Jr., op. cit., passim.

Sex

As is indicated in Table 5, the ratios of males to females among Spiritists closely parallel those of the population of the country at large and of each of the major geographical regions. This similarity continues in the various states.[5]

In Table 6 the proportions of males to females among the Spiritists of various age-groups are seen to follow the same general tendencies as those of the corresponding groups in the population at large. However, there is one particularly noticeable difference: in the ages between 20 and 39 years, men are less represented among the Spiritists than in the general population, while among those aged 40 and over the reverse is true. Further study, based upon data from subsequent censuses, should enable us to determine whether this difference indicates a dropping-out of older women, or a greater participation of younger women in recent years. The writer is inclined to the latter view.

Age

Spiritism is still in the process of relatively rapid growth through the conversion of adults, and its programs for the young are comparatively undeveloped. It is not surprising, therefore, that 57.1 per cent of those enumerated as related to the Spiritist movement in 1950 were 20 years old or older, in contrast to only 48.1 per cent of the total population in this category. Protestants in this age group approximated the national proportions, with 49.6 per cent aged 20 and over.

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[5]"Censo Demografico," VI Recenseamento do Brasil, 1950, Vol. I, pp. 8, 72.

Table 5.--Sex Ratios of the Total Population and of Spiritists in Brazil and Its Major Geographic Regions, 1950

Region	Sex Ratios, Total Population	Sex Ratios Spiritists
BRAZIL	99.3	99.7
North	103.8	103.3
Northeast	95.6	94.2
East	97.7	99.0
South	102.9	100.2
Central-West	104.9	103.7

SOURCE: Computed from data in "Censo Demográfico," VI Recenseamento Geral do Brasil, 1950, Rio de Janeiro: Conselho Nacional de Estatística, 1956, Vol. I, p. 72.

Table 6.--Sex Ratios of Total Population and of Spiritists in Brazil, By Age, 1950

	20-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-over
BRAZIL	91.5	96.6	100.2	106.0	105.9	100.8	77.5
Spiritists	90.1	92.2	96.6	107.7	115.5	108.9	85.8

SOURCE: Computed from data in "Censo Demográfico," VI Recenseamento Geral do Brasil, 1950, Rio de Janeiro: Conselho Nacional de Estatística, 1956, Vol. I, p. 8.

In Table 7, in which the adult population alone is treated
as a whole, it is seen that Spiritists are more highly represented in
the three groups which include those aged 30 through 59 than is the
general population (Spiritists: 60.6 per cent; Brazil: 54.0 per
cent), while among those aged 20 through 29 and more than 60, the
reverse is true.

Table 7.--Age Distribution of Total Population and of Spiritists in
Brazil, 20 Years Old and Older, 1950

	20-24	25-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-over
Brazil	20.1	16.8	25.5	17.7	10.8	5.9	3.1
Spiritists	15.7	14.4	26.5	21.1	13.0	6.4	2.7

SOURCE: Computed from data in "Censo Demografico," VI Recensea-
mento Geral do Brasil, 1950, Rio de Janeiro: Conselho Nacional de Esta-
tistica, 1956, Vol. 1, p. 8.

In a sample of Spiritists of the city of São Paulo, which included
569 adults 20 years of age and older, questioned in 1958, the following
age distribution was found: 20-29, 15.8 per cent; 30-39, 20.4 per
cent; 40-49, 25.8 per cent; 50-59, 19.0 per cent; 60 and over, 10.0
per cent.[6] The proportion of those Spiritists between the ages of 20
and 29 in São Paulo, according to this sample, is only about one-half
that which is indicated for all Spiritists in Table 8. On the other

[6]Camargo, op. cit., percentages computed from data on p. 165.

hand, 74.2 per cent of the "Paulista" Spiritists were from 30 to 59 years old, a much higher proportion than that reported for Spiritists as a whole.

Ethnic origins

There are no data concerning the population of Brazil which attempt to relate religion and ethnic origins. Nevertheless, because of the growing influence of "low Spiritism," which is strongly influenced by African religious elements, many persons associate all or most spiritistic manifestations with lower-class blacks. On the other hand, some scholars have attempted to link Kardecism and its wide acceptance almost exclusively to Portuguese "folk Catholicism" and superstitions.[7] However, mere casual observation indicates that the proportions of black persons are much lower among Kardecists than in the population at large. In 1966, the writer filled out interview schedules with 75 members of the large "Allan Kardec Spiritist Center" in Campinas, which has a membership of over 200. Only six of these persons were black. Twenty-three were either immigrants or children of immigrants from Spain, Italy, France, and Germany, and 46 were whites of Brazilian and Portuguese descent.

Attention has previously been drawn to that part of Brazil consisting of the "São Paulo-Rio de Janeiro axis" and the three southernmost states, as being the area with the largest numbers and highest concentration of Spiritists. These are also the states which have

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[7] For example, Donald Warren, Jr., "Portuguese Roots of Brazilian Spiritism," _Luso-Brazilian Review_, Vol. 5, no. 2 (December, 1968), pp. 3-33. Cited in present study, _supra_, p. 35.

heavy concentrations of people of Italian and, particularly in the far south, German and Polish stock. It is a common observation that immigrants in Brazil -- with certain exceptions -- have found it easy and natural to adapt themselves to many of the country's societal patterns and cultural norms. This appears to be true with respect to the adoption of the Brazilian expression of Kardecism by foreigners. It also appears to be the case that with some of these newcomers -- in particular, the better-educated -- the acceptance of Spiritism represents in part a reaction to disillusionment with the laxness of Brazilian Roman Catholicism. In addition, a desire to maintain social distance from those whom they consider to belong to the "superstitious low classes," appears to have led them to find Spiritism intellectually and socially appealing. Some of these people are socially maladjusted, unable to move on the same social plane as upper-class Brazilians to whom they may be equal or superior in intellectual accomplishment or in other capacities. Such persons and families are able to find in Spiritism intellectual, emotional, and social compensations. Hence, it is not strange that even a rapid perusal of Kardecist periodicals reveals many names such as Schutel, Figner, Imbassahy, Halfeld, Sarczuk, and Ferrioli.

Education

Illiteracy is relatively rare among Spiritists. In the study of São Paulo by Camargo, previously cited, only 2.2 per cent of the respondents could not read and write;[8] this is in sharp contrast to the

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[8]Camargo, op. cit., p. 166.

rates of illiteracy of 20.6 per cent in the city of São Paulo, 40.7

in the state, and 57.3 in the nation, as computed from census reports

of 1950.

Beyond this, however, Kardecism demands more than mere function-

al literacy from the vast majority of its adherents; it requires a

certain interest in study and in the intellectualization of beliefs.

In Table 8 are given the relative levels of instruction received by

the people of São Paulo and Brazil, which can be compared with the

educational status of Spiritists as indicated in Table 9, from data

secured from samples of the Spiritist populations of São Paulo and

Campinas. It is readily apparent that within the capital city the

Spiritists are drawn from groups of generally far higher educational

attainment than that enjoyed by the great majority of the population

of even that most privileged state in Brazil. While the number of

university trained and professional people in Campinas appears to be

large -- about one in six members -- the writer's personal acquaint-

ance with the Allan Kardec Center, which was sampled, and another cen-

ter, even larger and of equal social prestige, leads him to believe

that the sample is representative. (Membership records of the centers

are totally inadequate.)

These data give important indications concerning the social

composition of Spiritism. Education is very closely linked to socio-

economic status in societies such as the Brazilian, and the indications

are very strong that in cities such as Campinas (population 152,547 in

1950), and those of smaller size, greater proportions of the well-

educated and well-to-do are in the ranks of Spiritism than is the case

Table 8.--Percentages of Persons Aged Ten Years and Over, Completing
Various Academic Stages, in Brazil and the State of São Paulo, 1950

| | Stage of Instruction Completed | | |
	Elementary	Secondary	University and Professional
BRAZIL	14.8	2.7	.4
São Paulo	26.8	4.6	.7

SOURCE: Compiled and computed from data in "Censo Demográfico,"
VI Recenseamento Geral do Brasil, 1950, Rio de Janeiro: Conselho
Nacional de Estatística, 1956, Vol. I, p. 24 and Vol. XXV, pp. 20, 107.

Table 9.--Educational Levels of Spiritists in the Cities of São Paulo
(1958) and Campinas (1966)

| | Stage of Instruction Completed | | |
	Elementary	Secondary	University and Professional
São Paulo (N=580)	60.8	32.2	4.8
Campinas (N=75)	38.7	44.0	16.0

SOURCE: C.P.F. Camargo, Kardecismo e Umbanda, São Paulo: Livraria
Pioneira Editôra, 1961, p. 166; and results of survey by the writer in
Campinas.

in the largest urban areas. Being a Spiritist is one way of being an intellectual for many Brazilians, especially those of small towns. There are several reasons for this. The first is related to religious instruction. Roman Catholic theology is virtually untaught. Protestant doctrine is generally considered "more reasonable" than popular Catholicism, until this reasonableness is effaced by denominational quibblings or by the obscurantism of some Protestants. Many a "village free-thinker," faced with these alternatives, has found himself convinced of the plausibility of Kardec's open-ended system.

The second intellectual appeal of Kardecism comes in the form of a negative reaction to the encyclopedism which has characterized the educational system. Many local and regional leaders among the Spiritists, whose biographical sketches appear in the periodicals of the movement, have been curiosos -- men and women of an innovative, inventive nature -- who were ready to try the new and to search for answers, not content to learn by rote. These are often persons of substantial influence; many are medical doctors. Their effect upon the spread of Spiritism is in evidence in various sections of this study.

It is impossible to estimate how many highly-educated men study Spiritism on their own, without committing themselves to membership in any group. During the many visits he has made to the homes and offices of professional men, the writer has rarely failed to observe some of the works of Allan Kardec or other Spiritist writers. In the great cultural centers of Brazil, such as Rio de Janeiro, elite Spiritist groups are found. In a discussion of these groups, in

personal conversation, the eminent student of Latin American societies, Roland Hilton, described to the writer his meeting with two very high officials of the Brazilian Ministry of Education who belonged to such centers.

The Institutional Development of Brazilian Spiritism
Fundamental Questions of Autonomy and Organization

There is no official hierarchy of Spiritism in Brazil. There do exist, however, four general levels of cooperative endeavor: the individual center, local associations of centers, and state and national federations.

Every Spiritist center is an organization and a law unto itself. Nevertheless, in many localities, various centers are organized into associations on the level of the município (similar to county) or other unit. Up to the present time, such organizations are often extremely tenuous. They function principally in the planning and execution of joint representations in public celebrations, in order that "we Spiritists can make a good showing." Leaders of such associations in several Brazilian cities have spoken freely to the writer of the difficulty of "getting things organized"; "the people won't help."

Some of the functional reasons for this difficulty are at the heart of Spiritism and of certain of the motivations people have for adhering to it. First, Spiritism is a lay movement. Although it possesses many leaders on the various levels who inspire respect, and even veneration, there is no clergy. Any hierarchy of volunteers is apt to lack the time, the motivation, the discipline, and the authority which are necessary for the formation of an efficient

organization. Those who do have a modicum of these qualities are often feared as possible "dictators."

Most Spiritists are opposed to religious hierarchies; many feel that they have been freed from the domination of one. Less and less mention is heard of persons who are both Roman Catholics and Spiritists. Freedom of conscience and a sometimes belligerent attitude toward hierarchical authority are frequent themes in Spiritist writings and talks, particularly those which mention the conversion and struggles of Spiritist pioneers.[9] This movement has often been compared with those of the Baptists and other Protestant groups who emphasize individual freedom and the autonomy of the local congregation. Emílio Willems, in viewing this aspect of Protestantism, considers it "a symbolic protest against the traditional social structure," a structure which has, as prominent features, the "religious monopoly" of the Roman Catholic Church allied to the ruling classes.[10] This leads Willems to the formulation of a hypothesis which, although it refers to Pentecostal movements that occur largely among the lower classes, has significance for our analysis of the internal and external relationships of Spiritism. This student of religion in Brazil

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[9]Examples are found in such articles as the following, of recent publication: Noronha Filho, "Igreja e Diálogo," Revista Internacional de Espiritismo, Ano XLIV, no. 10 (Novembro, 1968), pp. 298-301; "O Espiritismo Não Tem Ramificações," ibid., pp. 306-307; Carlos Imbassahy, "Espiritismo e Christianismo," ibid., no. 6 (Julho, 1968), pp. 155-159; "Eurípedes Barsanulfo: Cinquentenário de Desencarnação," Reformador, Ano 86, no. 11 (Novembro, 1968), pp. 253-255.

[10]Followers of the New Faith, Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1967, p. 154.

hypothesizes that the extent of the resemblance of the structural and ideological elements of a particular religious denomination to those of the traditional society is in inverse relationship to the proselytic success of the denomination.[11]

The second reason for the weakness of local associations is that, since leadership in this movement is rarely conferred, but generally must be earned,[12] leaders are often unwilling to share powers of decision and other prerogatives with "outsiders." This objection frequently does not apply to affiliation with state or national groups, since their personnel would be too far removed to constitute a local threat. Such affiliations, in fact, often enhance the local prestige of the leader.

Third, many leaders and members, caught up in the activities and loyalties of their own center (and possibly even feeling rivalry toward others) do not perceive any functionality on the part of a municipal association. Such occasional activities as those mentioned above require no permanent organization.

The Development of State and National Federations

During the nineteenth century, a major factor which inhibited the formation of federated groups of centers was the difficulty involved in gaining legal status. Such problems in themselves often touched

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[11] Ibid.

[12] Cf. George C. Homans, The Human Group, New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, 1950, pp. 415-440.

off internal doctrinal disputes as well. When Telles de Menezes,

in 1873, was forced by Church and civil authorities of Bahia to

register his group as a "scientific society" and not a religious one,

a strong argument was put into the hands of those Spiritists who in-

sisted upon the philosophical-scientific and non-religious character

of the movement. Emphasis upon Spiritism as a science and/or a

philosophy on the part of many adherents was further strengthened by

the necessity of overcoming the general atmosphere of suspicion among

the people. Newspapers and police records of the time give ample

evidence of the widespread sensationalism and charlatanry on the part

of "spiritistic healers."[13] João do Rio (Paulo Barreto) in a classic

of Brazilian journalism of the turn of the century, describes the

heartless exploitation in the houses of such charlatans, in a terri-

fying atmosphere of false necromancy, crime, and prostitution.[14]

Such activities were unrelated to Kardecist centers.

In 1873, the "Grupo Confúcio" was organized in Rio de Janeiro,

not merely as a local center, but with the aim of directing Spiritist

activity in Brazil.[15] Doctrinal dissensions were still rife, however;

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[13]Leonidio Ribeiro e Murillo de Campos, O Espiritismo no Brasil: Contribuição ao Seu Estudo Clínico e Médico-Legal, São Paulo: Com- panhia Editora Nacional, 1931, cf. especially pp. 17-142; Frei Boaventura Kloppenburg, O Espiritismo no Brasil, Petrópolis: Editôra Vozes, 1961, pp. 12-19, 217-224. These authors assume conscious or unintended fraud in all cases.

[14]As Religiões do Rio, Rio de Janeiro: Organização Simões, 1951.

[15]Concerning the historical resumé which follows, cf.: Kloppen- burg, ibid., pp. 12-23; Francisco Candido Xavier, Brasil: Coração do Mundo e Pátria do Evangelho, Rio de Janeiro: Federaçao Espírita Brasi- leira, 1957, pp. 171-176; Unificação (Órgão Oficial da União Social

the group was disbanded, to be succeeded by other attempts at organization by former members, until, in 1880, a more lasting entity was formed under the name "Sociedade Espírita Fraternidade." Among its more prominent members were Francisco Leite de Bittencourt Sampaio, outstanding writer and politician, and Antônio Luís Sayão. These and others, who accepted the teachings of J.B. Roustaing, were ousted from the "Fraternidade," forming in 1885 the "Grupo Ismael."

A prominent business-man, Elias da Silva, had founded the periodical Reformador in 1883, as an organ of unity. In January, 1884, several members of the "Fraternidade," headed by an army officer, Marshal Ewerton Quadros, organized the Federação Espírita Brasileira, making the Reformador its official organ. The Federação was unrelated to any of the existing centers, and with diplomacy its members worked at the task of federating them. The almost impossible feat of uniting Roustaingists with those who accepted only Kardec was accomplished by two means. The first was the reception (by a medium trusted by all) of what was believed to be a message from the spirit of Allan Kardec on the twentieth anniversary of his death, calling for unity in the spirit of charity. The second consisted of the patiently astute efforts and the wisdom and kindness of a highly placed medical doctor and city-councilman, Adolfo Bezerra de Menezes, who had been brought to Spiritism through the healing of his own illness.

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Espírita; São Paulo), Setembro de 1968, p. 4, Janeiro de 1969, p. 4; and ANUARIO ESPIRITA, 1968, Araras: Instituto de Difusão Espírita, 1968, pp. 165-166.

On August 16, 1886, Bezerra de Menezes electrified the city of
Rio de Janeiro by making a ringing declaration of his adherence to
Spiritism, before a social gathering of more than 2,000 of the elite.
In 1890, the provisional government of the newly-formed Republic of
Brazil included in its New Penal Code strong sanctions against the
practice of Spiritism. Bezerra de Menezes, through his widely read
Spiritist column in the newspaper País and by his personal efforts, led
the successful fight for religious liberty. He was enabled by this
crisis to extend and strengthen the unity of the Spiritist groups.
With his irenic spirit, during his terms as president of the Federacao
(1889, 1895-1900), this leader and his coworkers were able to set the
course of Brazilian Spiritism definitively as a religious movement.
In that period of Spiritist history the sub-title on the masthead of
the Reformador was changed from "Evolutionist Organ" to "Religious
Monthly of Christian Spiritism." ("Mensário Religioso de Espiritismo
Cristão").

In the above-mentioned documentation by João do Rio -- one of the
very few descriptions of the multiplicity of religions in Rio de
Janeiro during this period -- the Federação is described in impressive
terms. It is pictured as having 800 members, including generals, ad-
mirals, and other persons in high places. Many followers among the
social elite are described as frivolous faddists, but the activities
directed toward healing and indoctrination, in the enormous and well-
organized headquarters, are treated with respect. The transcription
of a mediumistically "received" doctrinal address, delivered by the
president, serves as a model of what is still today considered by

Spiritists to be an exemplary oratorical resume of the origin and foundations of the doctrine.[16]

The Federação Espírita Brasileira presents enigmatic aspects. Although in many cases it is able to speak for the Spiritists of Brazil, it has been unwilling to disavow the teachings of Roustaing, and in this manner continues to alienate large groups. Its most useful function for most Spiritists consists in the enormous output of literature from its presses, which is discussed elsewhere in this chapter. The Federação is often accused of being oligarchical and dictatorial,[17] and the present writer and other researchers have had first-hand experience with its unwillingness to furnish statistical data concerning its activities, although an attentive and cordial reception is accorded to all. The current president, Dr. Wantuil de Freitas, has been in office since 1943. Under his administration, the publishing facilities of the Federação have become among the largest and most modern in Brazil. At the Federation headquarters, thousands of people are attended each year in programs of charity, education, job-training, medical assistance, and legal consultation. Most of the state federations are affiliated with the

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[16]João do Rio, op. cit., pp. 189-198. This chapter is entitled, significantly, "Spiritism Among the Sincere."

[17]Cf. the experiences of the leader of the Spiritist movement in Portugal: his surprise at being invited -- and furthermore, being asked to speak -- to the headquarters of the Federacao Espirita Brasileira; Isidoro Santos Duarte, O Espiritismo no Brasil (Ecos de uma Viagem), Rio de Janeiro: J. Ozon Editor, 1960, pp. 223-225.

Federação, and it exercises close supervision and control over the participating centers, to ensure their maintenance of the norms of doctrine and practice.

The Federação Espírita do Parana was organized in 1902. Similar organizations followed in other states, the most active and powerful of them being the União Espírita Mineira (1908), the Federação Espírita do Rio Grande do Sul (1921), and the Federação Espírita do Estado de São Paulo (1936). This latter group, formed of those who opposed the national Federação on doctrinal grounds, exercised not only the major Spiritist control within its own state, but also great influence in other parts of the nation. It called a unifying congress of state organizations in 1949; the Federação Espírita Brasileira refused to participate, suspended those state organizations which agreed to take part. The impending crisis was resolved in a meeting of state federation officials in Rio de Janeiro, with the signing of what is known as the "Pacto Aureo" de Unificação ("Golden Pact" of Unification). This pact brought into being a permanent Conselho Nacional Federativo, composed of representatives of the Federacao Espirita Brasileira and of each state federation. This council is "the orientor of Spiritism in Brazil," with Allan Kardec's Book of the Spirits and Book of the Mediums as doctrinal standards. The monthly meetings of the Conselho are held at the headquarters of the Federação in Rio, and its deliberations are published in the Reformador. Thus the remarkable Brazilian political talent for compromise produced a solution. Doctrinal positions and organizational control were both involved; since the doctrinal question was

on a secondary issue, the Federação conceded it, rather than see its sphere of influence reduced. It still publishes Roustaing's work, and the matter apparently is no longer discussed officially.

In recent months the Federação Espírita do Estado de São Paulo has proposed a manner of uniting with the União das Sociedades Espíritas, the next largest association in the state of São Paulo, and indications are that the plan of union will be accepted.

Since the period of the "Pacto Áureo," conditions for further united effort and even unification have steadily improved. This is due to several factors: the growth of the nationalistic consciousness, and greatly increased ease of travel and communication; the "snow-balling" effect of unification (each new "união" or "federação" adds not only enthusiasm but new publications, the content of which is devoted largely to the subject of unity and to reports of congresses, et cetera); the increasing emphasis upon healing, sentimental mysticism, and works of charity, which provide less controversial subjects in doctrinal studies; and finally, of great importance, the growth of the youth organizations, with their enthusiasm for large gatherings and united efforts. (The writer counted, in recent periodicals, news items concerning more than 20 activities usually denoted by such initials as COMECSESP -- Concentração de Mocidades Espíritas do Centro-Sul do Estado de São Paulo -- Concentration of Spiritist Youth of the South-Central Region of the State of Sao Paulo.)

As a result of the "Pacto Áureo," in 1949 two youth organizations, the União das Juventudes Espíritas do Distrito Federal and the Conselho Consultivo das Mocidades Espíritas do Brasil, joined to become the

Youth Department of the Federação in its headquarters in Rio. Its monthly official organ is Brasil Espírita. There is a small but growing number of local Spiritist women's organizations, patterned -- as is the youth work -- after the similar work of Protestants. Associations of Spiritist doctors, journalists, and other professionals exist. One of the best-known is the Cruzada dos Militares Espíritas (Crusade of Spiritist Military Men); since the days of Marshal Ewerton Quadros, Spiritism has had a large following in the military establishment. (The writer has observed large numbers of Kardecists among the soldiers of Campo Grande, where he resided near the large Army post. He also was acquainted with higher officers who "followed Kardec," but in solitary study, not in the centers.)

Activities of Charity and Social Service

The central place of charity, both as a sentiment and in practical works, is delineated in the discussions of the beliefs and the cultus of Kardecism. The activities of charity and social service are now considered, in their relationships to the Spiritist organizations and to the society at large.

Societies such as that of Brazil include a relatively large number of indigents who are ill, crippled, orphaned, aged, or otherwise unable -- or unwilling -- to care for themselves, and who receive no help from families. Religious teachings and other cultural elements have given emphasis to the virtue and the rewards of charity, which is largely sentimental and impulsive in its expression. Spiritism, looking upon itself as the corrective and fulfilling expression of genuine Christianity, the religion of love, frequently has charitable works as its major expression.

In conversations and correspondence with officers of Spiritist associations, the researcher grows all too accustomed to variations of the expression: "We are very sorry, but our records are very in-complete...." Many local institutions are extremely well-organized and have supplied excellent records, but the localism referred to in a previous section inhibits data-collection on the part of municipal and state organizations.[18] Nevertheless, in the periodicals of these unifying entities considerable space is devoted to reports, fre-quently illustrated with photographs, of the institutions maintained by local groups. The ANUÁRIO ESPÍRITA, published each year since 1964, is an excellent depository of such material, as many local associa-tions accept the opportunity to give wide-spread publicity to Spiri-tist work in their cities.

Typical of the presentations of the work of social concern is a brochure prepared in 1969 by the Spiritist youth and the municipal association of Franca, a city with light industry in a cattle-raising section of São Paulo. In this municipio of about 70,000 persons, the brochure reports the presence of eight Spiritist centers; three "foundations"; two youth organizations; one elementary school with

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[18]As well-organized an entity as the Federação Espírita do Rio Grande do Sul has no regular, efficient reporting system. In a survey which it conducted for a complete publication of Spiritist acitivity in the state, replies were received from 42 out of 52 member organizations in the city of Porto Alegre, and from 85 out of 125 in the rest of the state, or 127 of 177 member groups. (A Reencarnação, Ano XXIII, no. 7 (Abril, 1957), p. 12.) These 127 organizations reported a total of 21,237 members; this is very low when compared to 125,552 members reported in the 1950 census.

120 pupils; one hospital for the mentally ill with 200 patients; two homes for the aged -- one of which also has 50 orphans and a group of houses where indigent families are maintained; a hostel for homeless men; a religious newspaper; and a book-store. The "foundations" house Spiritist centers, but by virtue of medical and dental assistance, provision of clothing and food for the poor, and other service activities performed in them, they are legally registered and receive financial assistance from governmental agencies. All of the entities which are eligible, and even one of the youth groups, are thus registered. Registration numbers and the names of members of the directorates of the various institutions are given. Appearance of the same names on several directorates indicates the close relationship of the centers to the social service projects. Following the common practice in Brazil, each institution has sustaining members who contribute monthly to its support, and whose ranks include many non-Spiritists.

Even with the volunteer service and financial support of the members of the centers, such work is usually possible only with financial help from outside. A report of the activities of the "Allan Kardec Spiritist Center" of Campinas (approximately 200 members) from January to October, 1968, was prepared for the writer by the director of its social service branch, the "Instituto Popular Humberto de Campos." Of 2,339 students in elementary, typing, and sewing schools, 1,269 attended free. The medical and dental offices, with Spiritist doctors giving their services, attended 4,340 persons. The Institute keeps 34 homeless boys, who operate a messenger service and "Goodwill Industry" project. It furnished food and clothing to 103 families,

in addition to school lunches for 500 students. Total expenses for these and other services were 43,433.86 New Cruzeiros, or U.S. $11,657.00, a very large amount of money in the Brazilian economy.

Even though over-all statistical data, gathered over a period of time, are lacking, certain observations can be made concerning the programs of assistance and education of the Spiritist organization in Brazil:

1. In general, there is participation by members of all ranks in the actual work of assistance. For example, members of the board of directors of the 550-bed Hospital Espírita in Pôrto Alegre, including a former mayor of the city, take turns in the direction of devotional and "passe" sessions with the mentally-ill patients.

2. Most work is done by relatively small groups, and is charity or assistance of a direct, immediate type. Although there is an increasing awareness of the need for social and economic changes of a fundamental nature, most people see no possibility of participation in such changes, but they do see immediate needs and attempt to meet them on a personal basis.

3. As a consequence of the above, much that is done is of a very practical nature, such as using the delivery-boys in Campinas to bring in used articles for the repair-and-resale shop.

4. The political issue of church-state separation creates for the Brazilian no qualms concerning the use of public funds by religious groups, for conducting their service programs. The government agencies alone are usually unable to meet the needs, even though a welfare-state organization exists. Religious groups are a logical choice for assistance in carrying out welfare objectives.

5.   Even so, public financing will tend to be one factor in the
increasing impersonalization of many Spiritist programs; with more
money available, larger institutions, with fewer volunteer workers,
will appear.   Another factor of importance in the impersonalization
and growth of the programs is a growing number of homeless children,
matriarchal families, and aged persons in the cities of Brazil; at
the same time, urban conditions are increasingly less conducive to
the care of such people by families[19] (see Chapter VII).   Leaders of
organizations such as those mentioned in Campinas feel the growing
load of assistance to these people.

6.   An important change to programs of a more "long-run" nature
is the growth in number and size and Spiritist schools.   A large
portion of these schools began through the necessity of educating the
children in orphanages sponsored by the centers.   Beginning as ele-
mentary schools, typically they have added courses, as in the case of
the large Spiritist school, the Colégio 'Precursor', in Belo Horizonte,
Minas Gerais.[20]

7.   There is an ever greater emphasis upon modernization of
pedagogy, child-care in the orphanages, and techniques of social
service.   The insistence upon "old-fashioned morality" is rarely

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[19]Cf. Thales de Azevedo, "Family, Marriage, and Divorce in Brazil,"
in Dwight B. Heath and Richard N. Adams, Contemporary Cultures and
Societies of Latin America, New York: Random House, 1965, pp. 296-299.

[20]Articles on this subject are frequent; they are typified by
those in an official spiritist paper, O Espírita Mineiro, Ano LIX,
no. 123   (Janeiro e Fevereiro de 1967), pp. 1-2.

related in Brazil to a resistance to modern educational methods, so often found in the United States. Spiritists, with their conservative moralism, perceive in modern child-care and educational methods an emphasis upon love and respect for personality and freedom of development which appear to be consonant with their beliefs and outlook. A major occurrence in Brazilian Spiritism, in recent years, was the I Encontro de Educadores Espíritas da Região Centro-Sul (I Meeting of Spiritist Educators of the South-Central Region) in Curitiba, Paraná in April, 1968.[21] At this meeting, a bold plan was presented for the development of a Spiritist educational system, with a Spiritist educational psychology, a Spiritist pedagogy, and a Spiritist philosophy of education.

8. Its social service and educational programs appear to contribute to the general tendency of Brazilian Spiritism toward a higher middle-class composition and value-orientation, and toward a greater rationalization of its institutional structure.

Spiritism and the Media of Communication

Spiritism is a doctrine with an explicit formulation, knowledge of which is considered by its adherents necessary for the due progress and evolution of every spirit. It is therefore of fundamental importance to note the means by which the followers of Allan Kardec disseminate the doctrine, and their adaptation of these means to the target population.

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[21]ANUÁRIO ESPÍRITA, 1969, p. 247.

Gathering in public to hear good speakers, and the writing and reciting of poetry, are treasured socio-cultural elements among the Brazilian people. Spiritist lectures and literature are frequently well-adapted to this important pattern of social behavior. The traditional Roman Catholic religion has rarely offered opportunity for such expression, and literary creativity has had almost no religious channels. The creative talent -- as well as the mere verbosity -- of people in local situations has been channelled through literary clubs and the oratory typical of patriotic celebrations. Protestantism, a book-centered, preaching religion, brought new opportunities for verbal expression. Spiritists have an advantage even over Protestants: since all members are laymen, occasions for speaking and writing are more evenly distributed among them.

"Evangelization" or "the preaching of the Gospel" in regular meetings is described elsewhere in this study. Informal proselyting activity is frequent in personal or small-group situations, but such techniques as street-preaching, still common among Protestants, and not employed by Kardecists.

In 1966, 944 radio stations were functioning in Brazil. From large numbers of them, principally in small cities of the interior, are broadcast the messages of speakers representing local Kardecist centers. Until recent years, telephone lines were inadequate for the establishment of regular networks; therefore, most programs are local and generally enjoy a good audience. A small number of very powerful stations in principal cities do cover the nation with their broadcasts, and well-known Spiritist orators often speak from them.

In 1940, the União Federativa Espírita Paulista acquired the "Rádio Piratininga," a powerful station, thus making it the first of several Spiritist-owned broadcasting units. It is well-known that stations of a sectarian nature tend to be heard principally by their own co-religionists, but the total effects of such stations and programs is unknown.

The movement under study has no television programs, but several events have provided opportunities for sensational documentaries and interviews concerning Spiritism. In 1964, after a leading weekly magazine "unmasked" an alleged fraudulent "spirit materialization" to which it had given serious publicity, a series of televised debates between Spiritists and opponents occupied national attention for weeks.[22] More recently, two interviews with Francisco Candido Xavier were of nation-wide interest. The more arresting of the two dealt with the death of Brazil's first heart-transplant patient, and with the subject of organ transplants in the light of Spiritist doctrine. Both were transcribed in full in the ANUÁRIO ESPÍRITA, 1969.

Persons accustomed to consider such television productions as "The Twilight Zone," "Outer Limits," and "One Step Beyond" as mere entertainment are impressed by the seriousness with which they are taken by many persons in Brazil, particularly those within the spiritistic religions. The writer has been present when Kardecists used such productions as evidences of the truth of their own doctrines.[23]

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[22]O Cruzeiro, Jan. 18, and February 1, 1964.

[23]He has recently been requested to remit to a cultured Spiritist acquaintance a script of the original production of "The Ghost and

Among the socio-cultural factors conducive to the acceptance of Spirit-
ism by Brazilian people is the personal, often intensely dramatic
view of life. This is particularly in evidence in the positive re-
actions to such dramatic productions as those just mentioned, whether
in person or on the screen.

That which impresses all observers, however, is the impact of
the Spiritist press upon the country, and particularly upon that
relatively small portion of the population with at least a secondary
education. Repeated references have been made to local and associa-
tional periodicals. The Reformador, published by the Federação Espí-
rita Brasileira since 1883, boasts of being the oldest Spiritist
publication in continual publication in the world. Yet no circula-
tion figures are available for these periodicals as a whole.

In July, 1968, the Editoral Department of the Federação reported
that up to that time it had published ten million Spiritist books,
including 2,334,000 copies of works of Allan Kardec, and 1,931,000
copies of the books of F.C. ("Chico") Xavier. The books of Kardec
with the largest printings were:

> O Evangelho Segundo o Espiritismo 760,000
>   (The Gospel According to Spiritism)
>
> A Prece (Prayer) 485,000
> O Livro dos Espíritos 330,000
>   (The Book of the Spirits)

Mrs. Muir" (now a television series). This person is a leading
Spiritist writer, who wishes to translate the play into Portuguese,
in order that drama-groups of young Spiritists may use it as a means
of propagating the doctrine.

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O Livro dos Médiuns ..................... 281,000
    (The Book of the Mediums)

O Céu e o Inferno (Heaven and Hell) ..... 107,000[24]
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The LAKE, Livraria Allan Kardec Editôra, in Sao Paulo, second largest Spiritist publisher, printed 435,000 volumes in 1959, of which 80,000 were works of Kardec, and 180,000 were other doctrinal expositions. The rest were fictional and children's books which present Spiritist beliefs.[25] This is the publishing house which in 1964 revived the English translation of Le Livre des Esprits and is exporting copies to Great Britain. The LAKE is the publishing arm of the Federação Espírita do Estado de São Paulo. Both this Federação and the Federação Espírita Brasileira devote the profits of their publishing enterprises to very extensive programs of assistance to the needy.

The Editôra Pensamento, operated by an esoteric society, has for many years published annually the Almanaque d'O Pensamento, popularly thought of as a Spiritist almanac. Each issue consists of about half a million copies. In addition, this very liberal group prints other Spiritist and Umbandist works and those on magic, including the Book of Saint Cyprian.

The imposing number and rapid sale of Spiritist publications are evidences of the need for analyses of the content and the market of such books and periodicals. Even in the absence of such an analysis,

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[24]Reformador, Ano 86, no. 10 (Outubro de 1968), p. 237.

[25]Camargo, op. cit., p. 144. This author gives 20,000 as the average number of copies for a best-seller in Brazil, thus indicating the extreme popularity of the works of Kardec and Xavier.

however, certain important facts may be noted. One is the tendency, frequently lamented by Spiritist leaders, away from "philosophical studies," particularly those based on The Spirits' Book, and from the scientific aspects of Spiritism.[26] The above list of "best sellers" is consonant with such observations; "devotional" materials of Xavier, even though they are of more recent production, outsell doctrinal works. Among Kardec's own writings, the Gospel According to Spiritism and Prayer have nearly twice the volume of the three doctrinal books listed.

The Spiritist messages found in the periodicals consist largely of banal, moralistic cliches and pious, sentimental uplift. The following is an example from the prolific pen of Francisco Candido Xavier: (Emmanuel is the "dictating spirit"):

> Thou shalt preserve the faith. Thou shalt learn with her to sing praises for the blessings of the Father Supreme, manifesting the gratitude that wells up in Thy spirit. Even so, above all thou shalt take her as the sure guide along the way of the regenerating trials of Earth, that thou mayest worthily fulfill the designs of the Lord, in the execution of the tasks which life has reserved for thee.
>
> Emmanuel
>
> ([From] a page received by the medium Francisco Candido Xavier, in a public meeting of the Christian Spiritist Communion, on the night of January 19, 1968, in Uberaba, Minas Gerais.)[27]

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[26]This was observed by Camargo as far back as 1960: op. cit., pp. 146-148, and more recently by Donald Warren, Jr.: "Spiritism in Brazil," Journal of Inter-American Studies, Vol. 10, no. 3 (July-August, 1968), pp. 397-398.

[27]Reformador, Ano 86, no. 12 (Dezembro de 1968), p. 288.

Another tendency, noted in a previous section, is that toward emphasis upon works of charity and the building of social service institutions. Although these are essential to the movement, concern is shown by some leaders that much space is devoted to reports of them, complete with photographs, while little is given to genuine study of the basic beliefs. Related to this is the general turning of the attention of editors of periodicals to the subjects of unification and of the institutionalization of the movement. A foremost example of this process is the ANUÁRIO ESPÍRITA, published annually since 1964 by the Instituto de Difusão Espírita in the small city of Araras, São Paulo. The ANUÁRIO is avowedly a promotional organ. In addition to complete and well-illustrated reports of the institutions of Spiritism in various cities and regions, it carries announcements and reports of congresses and institutes, "fillers" of devotional messages and psychographed poems; biographies of outstanding Spiritists of the past; news of Spiritism in the world; "name-dropping" articles concerning spiritistic phenomena in the lives of Clark Gable, Elizabeth Taylor, Winston Churchill or Abraham Lincoln; and articles which are often about doctrinal subjects but rarely come to grips with them. The ANUÁRIO is an excellent bird's-eye view of much of what Brazilian Spiritism is today. This is helpful for curious outsiders (very few of whom are aware of its existence), but it may be too similar in content to local and long-established periodicals; the first ANUÁRIO had a printing of 15,000 copies, but the 1969 issue is down to 8,000 copies.

Mediumistic Phenomena and the Popularization of Spiritism

The tendency grows among Spiritists to fill the religious gap in Brazilian institutions and daily experiences, and toward the provision of a rationale with which to meet the changes implicit in modernization. It is well illustrated not only by the general content of publications, as noted above, but in the great impression which has been made upon the Brazilian public by the work of two mediums: one, the writer who has received frequent mention, Francisco Candido Xavier; the other, a healer.

Born in 1910 in a backward mill-town in Minas Gerais, "Chico" Xavier lost his mother when he was five years old. The family was large and poor, and as a small boy, he worked on the night shift in the textile mill and studied during the day. He was known as sensitive and intelligent, and had a prodigious memory. The family was strongly Catholic, but when Spiritist friends cured Chico's sister of "attacks," and showed great kindness to the family, the father and children were converted to Kardecism. At the age of 17, Chico showed unusual mediumistic capacities; and in 1931 he "psychographed," or -- as was believed -- wrote under the direct guidance of the spirits of departed Brazilian literary figures of note, a small volume of poems, which was immediately published by the Federação in Rio.

The publication of works attributed to the spirits of men long dead created a furor in literary circles, particularly since the "author" was an unlettered small-town cashier. One of the distinguished writers who "contributed" to the book was Humberto de Campos, and during the following ten years, five of Chico Xavier's

books were attributed entirely to that author. In 1944 his widow sued

the Federação and Chico Xavier; the fundamental decision forced upon the

court was as to the genuine character of the spirit-writings. Compari-

sons of the writings of "Humberto the Man," and "Humberto the Spirit"

appeared to reveal one uniform style in both, and the Spiritists won

the case.[28] Even so, the spirit of Humberto de Campos refused to

allow further works to carry his name, and subsequent publications by

this noted "spirit" bear the simple name, Brother X.

Xavier has passed his adult life as a humble government clerk.

Very modest, he lives in a house similar to the one in which he was

born; proceeds from his books go to the social service work of the

Federação. After a scandal in which the "psychography" of a nephew

was admitted by the nephew himself to be a fraud, and in which

aspersions were cast upon Chico, the famous medium moved to Uberaba, in

the "Spiritist heart-land" of Minas Gerais. There his home is a mecca

for Spiritists and the curious. There and all over Brazil, the fortieth

year of his mediunic work was celebrated in 1967. His books now number

93, all purportedly dictated by spirits.

Despite the banal and sentimental character of many of his oc-

casional "pages received in session...," there is a doctrinal pattern

discernible in Chico Xavier's books. Three of them parallel Kardec's

three major works; each may be seen to be a commentary -- in warm,

accessible language and in terms of felt needs of the modern Brazilian

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[28]Miguel Timponi, A Psicografia Perante os Tribunais, Federação
Espírita Brasileira, 1945 (Includes transcripts of articles in news-
papers, magazines, and other publications which gave the case wide
publicity)

-- of the corresponding volume of the "Master." The "spirit of André
Luiz" contributes much that claims to link Spiritism with modern
science, while "Emmanuel" is a theologian-philosopher. Some "spirits"
present doctrine or "spiritual laws" in the form of novels; these prob-
ably illustrate best the Romantic attempt that is being made to apply
nineteenth-century moralism, science, and theodicy to twentieth-century
life. One of the more important of his works -- "by the spirit of
Humberto de Campos" -- is Brasil: Coração do Mundo e Pátria do Evangelho
(Brazil: Heart of the World and Homeland of the Gospel, 1938). This is
a melodramatic account of the direction of the destiny of Brazil by
the "spirit Ismael" over the past 450 years. The guidance of the nation
to world spiritual leadership, through such "apostles" as Bezerra de
Menzes and heads of state unknowingly led by the spirits, appeals to the
growing national consciousness in Brazil.

Chico Xavier and his writings embody much that is representative,
to many Brazilians, of being a Brazilian and being a Christian:
modesty and piety, the warm personal heart expressed in acts of kind-
ness, articulation of what he thinks and feels, and a feeling of destiny
for himself and for Brazil.

The second medium to whom reference was made is José Pedro de
Freitas, also of old Minas Gerais. He is virtually unknown by this
name, but "Zé Arigó" or simply Arigó is a more common household term
than even Chico Xavier.

Arigó is from a well-to-do but humble, strongly Catholic family,
farm-owners in a rural area in which religion and tradition are firmly
held. As a boy, he noticed the occasional peculiar behavior of

material objects near him. While still a young man, he experienced several unexpected trances in the presence of sick persons, during which he compulsively but expertly performed surgical operations with knives or other crude instruments. Convinced that this was the work of spirits, he began the study of Kardec, and opened the first Spiritist Center in his hometown of Congonhas do Campo.

Despite the open hostility of the Roman Catholic clergy, he attended increasingly large crowds of people in the Centro Espírita Jesus Nazareno. It is believed by the Spiritists and many others that most of the operations are performed through him by the spirit of a German, "Dr. Fritz"; however, there are other "spirits" who specialize: the gynecologist, for example, is a Japanese, "Dr. Catarachi," and the oculist is "Dr. Pierre."

He treated, and is believed to have saved the life of, a daughter of Juscelino Kubitschek, then President of Brazil, and has performed operations on numerous persons of high status, both from Brazil and from other countries. The number of persons treated by Arigó is now well above 3 million. He does not receive money; treatments are done in the morning and at night, for in the afternoon José Pedro de Freitas is a clerk in the local Social Security office.

In spite of the imposing testimonies given by many thousands of persons, many of them of great prestige, since 1954 Arigó has faced accusations of charlatanism by the Medical Association of Minas. Convicted once, and pardoned by President Kubitschek, his subsequent convictions and appeals have cause his imprisonment and release several times, and have provided material for great amounts of sensational

journalism. Throughout this period, however, Arigó has demonstrated the same simplicity and humility which characterize Chico Xavier, and the journalists have been unable to carry their sensationalism into his own life.[29]

He has a comfortable home in his native town of Congonhas do Campo, the site of much of the work of Brazil's most famous sculptor, "The Little Cripple." His only other possession is a ten-acre farm near the town. Unlike his friend Chico Xavier, who never married, Arigó has a wife and six sons. They appear to be part of a typical, extended rural family, and separation from them is the only sacrifice acknowledged by the healer with regard to his work and his imprisonment. Scientists from the United States and other countries have studied him and his cures, and he has rejected many lucrative offers to leave Congonhas. It is reported that in February, 1969, he began operating again, his first patient having been a famous soccer player.[30]

An expectant attitude toward miraculous healing is an aspect of Brazilian culture since earliest times. From time to time "healers" appear, often attracting large numbers of people. In recent decades, through the news media and with the power of its own press, Spiritism has been able in some degree to link its own rationale to such phenomena in the public mind. This is greatly facilitated when the healers

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[29]A good account of Arigó's life, work, and his trials and imprisonment may be found in O Cruzeiro, Ano XXXVIII, nos. 31 and 32 (6 de maio and 13 de maio de 1966).

[30]Desobsessão, Pôrto Alegre, Ano XXI, no. 252 (Fevereiro de 1969), p. 7.

themselves profess Spiritism, as in the present case. Confirmation is given and prestige added to the work of local centers, reinforcing the factor which is vitally requisite to any sustained work of healing through personality: generalized expectancy of the phenomenon. This attitude, coupled with constantly increasing medical costs, and the continued alienation of the medical profession from the public, leads large numbers of people, who have no way to access to Zé Arigó, to seek Spiritist friends or local centers.

Spiritism in its Internal and External Relationships:

Typological Classification

The place of Spiritism in the religious development of Brazil has been indicated (Chapter III), as have its principal aspects as a socio-religious movement, in the present chapter. In the presentation of these elements and processes, certain features have become visible in such a way as to make possible an attempt at a tentative classification of Spiritism among the religions.

The unsettled state of the sociological classification of religious bodies is discussed in the review of the literature (Chapter II, supra). Several features of the internal life of Spiritism and of its relationships to the wider society contribute to difficulty in the typological description of it.

In its early stages in Brazil, this movement possessed largely the characteristics of a cult; the groups were oriented toward the needs and experiences of individuals, loosely organized, and disconnected from the established religious institution. Riven by heterodoxy of belief, they were short-lived, and an arduous political process of long duration was

necessary in order that they develop accepted norms and structures. Even so, these still apply largely to autonomous local societies. Thus internally Spiritism possesses both sectarian and denominational characteristics. The latter are particularly in evidence in the processes of institutionalization and unification.

In its relationship to other religions and to the sociocultural environment, one feature which militates strongly against the classification of Spiritism as either cult or sect is the broad strand of social and cultural continuity which relates it to Brazilian society as a whole. The "break" which it represents with many of the beliefs and cultic aspects of the traditional religion has already existed for generations in many families and groups which have been nominally Catholic. Furthermore, parallels and affinities between "folk Catholicism" and Spiritism have been indicated. A major one of these is the pragmatic, instrumental view of religion.

Even today, many people avail themselves of the therapeutic function of Spiritism -- often after other means have failed -- but remain Catholics or profess no religion. This occurs to an ever greater extent in low spiritist circles. Physical and mental therapy constitute the major manifest function of Umbanda, and the writer concurs with Camargo that ever larger areas of this activity are being preempted from the Spiritists by the Umbandistas.[31] This is due in part to the less institutionalized character of the doctrinal and social aspects of Umbanda, which facilitates the instrumental use of its cultus by

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[31] *Op*. *cit*., pp. 74-75, 99 ff.

individuals, with little emphasis on conversion or commitment. Proponents of uniformization and institutionalization of Umbanda are as yet a very small minority.

On the other hand, the therapeutic and other aspects of Kardecism, as viewed from within by the believers, form an integrated whole. The movement has acquired characteristics which might well be those of a denomination or a very loose ecclesiastical body. The believers might well reject such terminology, for they consider Spiritism not as "a religion," but the fundament which is necessary for all true religion. "Spiritism is a doctrine,"[32] in the oft-cited words of Allan Kardec, and should therefore not be considered as "one among other religions." According to a certain logic, it should possess no social institutions. Neither should it have norms and sanctions, since a basic tenet of its orthodoxy is that in the relativities of evolution there can be no final orthodoxy. Sociologically, however, it is a movement which has growing and solidifying institutions and specific norms, in which Sr. Carlos Imbassahy himself, for example, is deeply involved. With its present doctrinal, cultic, and social definitions (both within itself and in relation to society), Brazilian Spiritism may be considered a developing religious denomination.

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[32] Carlos Imbassahy, "Espiritismo e Cristianismo," Revista Internacional de Espiritismo, Ano XLIV, no. 6 (Julho de 1968), p. 156.

CHAPTER VI

HISTORICAL ANTECEDENTS WHICH AFFECTED THE RISE OF SPIRITISM

IN BRAZIL

The present chapter is an endeavor to indicate certain historical
conditions, elements, and processes within Brazilian society which were
instrumental in setting the stage for the advent and the development of
Spiritism in Brazil. The religious conditions of the colonial period
and that of the Empire appear in Chapter III, as a background for the
subsequent exposition of Spiritism. The historical elements and proces-
ses under consideration in the chapter include the following: the
agrarian character of colonial society, and the modifications which it
underwent, and the influence of European intellectual and technological
developments.

The Agrarian Colonial Society and Its Decline

The dependence upon plantation agriculture, which relied upon
slave labor, was a major determinant of the character of society in
colonial Brazil. In this chapter we examine the principal features of
the agrarian society and the transformations which occurred within it up
into the nineteenth century, at which time Spiritism was introduced
into Brazilian life.

The Agrarian Character of the Colonial Society

By 1533, the Portuguese had been engaged for a third of a century
in little more than the extraction of brazilwood from their New World
possession. In that year, however, Martim Afonso de Sousa established

the first Brazilian sugar mill in São Vincente, near the present port
of Santos. A few decades after this a whole social and economic system
had developed, founded upon the large land-holding, slave labor, and
sugar cane, a product admirably fitted for the rich massapê soil.
The enormous land-grants, called sesmarias, were of such extent that
even after many divisions, through inheritance or sale, each remaining
part constituted a plantation of sometimes unknown dimensions. Each
of these holdings was a domain unto itself, subject to the "Big House",
which has been described in classic manner by Gilberto Freyre.[1]

Throughout this period, and up into the nineteenth century, life
in Brazil could be characterized largely by two words, "isolation" and
"exploitation." The geographic isolation of the new continent from the
home-land was accentuated by the oppressive colonial policies of an
avaricious and debt-ridden Crown. Brazil's ports were kept closed to
nearly all trade save that of the annual "sugar fleets" and other
shipments of raw materials, and the receipt of manufactured goods, slaves,
and other items controlled by the Metropolis. All but the lightest
manufacturing was prohibited. Except for the government-controlled
shipping, towns had few functions. Social and economic life was

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[1] Gilberto Freyre, The Masters and the Slaves, trans. Samuel
Putnam, 2nd Eng. rev. ed., New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1963. Cf. also,
by the same author, Nordeste, Rio de Janeiro: Livraria José Olympio
Editôra, 1961. For further bibliography on this period of Brazilian
social and economic development, cf. Fernando de Azevedo, Brazilian
Culture, trans., William Rex Crawford, New York: Macmillan, 1950,
pp. 45, 66-67.

organized as widely separated nuclei on a few huge plantations, where nothing was bought from outside except "iron, salt, powder and lead."

An outstanding sociologist has described this "ganglionated and dispersed aspect of extreme rarefaction" of the colonial society as the basic cause of its inefficient government:

> This government -- fragmented, pulverized, dissolved --
> is really an adaptation of political organization to
> colonial society. This latter is not a complex and
> cohesive whole...it is, on the contrary, a vast col-
> lection of social nodules, of little human groups,
> living their isolated life, dispersed along the im-
> mense littorals, lost in the solitudes of the bound-
> less hinterland; cities flowering on the coast while
> in the sertões there are malformed and lifeless ham-
> lets, insignificant encampments and villages, rest-
> stops for pack-trains, mining and nuclei -- lively
> and congested but unstable and transitory; and princi-
> pally, 'round about these rudimentary urban or urbani-
> zing centers, the endless mantle of innumerable latifundia,
> both agricultural and pastoral, extending to the deep-
> est zones of the interior, every one autonomous and
> almost without the slightest economic or social con-
> tact with others.[2]

Such isolation, closely related to economic and political rivalries was necessarily a factor in the development of strong regional feel-ings. José Honório Rodrigues has cited, as an "admirable synthesis" of the Brazilian character at the end of the colonial period (1808), the following description by the historian Capistrano de Abreu:

> ...five ethnographic groups bound actively by a common
> language and passively by a common religion, molded by
> the environments of five different geographical regions,
> filled with a noisy enthusiasm for the natural riches of

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[2] F.J. Oliveira Vianna, Evolução do Povo Brasileiro, São Paulo: Monteiro Lobato & Cia. Editores, n.d., pp 189-190. (Originally pub-lished as the first volume of the 1920 census of Brazil.)

of the land, feeling aversion or scorn for the
Portuguese, yet having no particular esteem for
one another.[3]

The second characteristic aspect of this agrarian society, as
mentioned above, was exploitation, of both natural and human resources.
Such exploitation was inherent in the system. The concentration of
land ownership in the hands of a few gives rise to a specific type of
rural social system in all places in which it occurs. Smith has pre-
sented the following characteristics of such a system, in contrast to
those of a system in which family-sized farms prevail:

System Based on Large Holdings	System Based on Family-sized Farms
1. High degree of social strati-fication.	Low degree of social stratifica-tion.
2. Little vertical social mobility.	Much vertical social mobility.
3. Caste as an important factor.	Caste as unimportant.
4. Low average intelligence.	High average intelligence.
5. Restricted development of personality.	Broad development of personality.
6. "Order-obey" personal relations.	Equalitarian personal relations.
7. Routine all-important.	Search for improvement, progress, etc.
8. Manual labor is degrading.	Manual labor considered dignifying.
9. Low levels and standards of living.	High levels and standards of living.
10. Little incentive to work and save.	Great incentive to work and save.[4]

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[3]José Honório Rodrigues, The Brazilians, Their Character and
Aspirations, Austin: The University of Texas Press, 1967, p. 42.

[4]T. Lynn Smith, The Process of Rural Development in Latin America,
Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1967, pp. 15-16.

As is clear from this presentation, the underlying social characteristic of the society founded upon the latifundium is a rigid social stratification, with a strict division between a very small social elite and an under-privileged majority, with almost no provision for a middle class.

Gilberto Freyre, in his classic presentation of such a society in Brazil, pictures the irony of a system geared to the production of riches, yet which for centuries produced an undernourished people. "The system of big landownership [which] prevailed in slave-holding Brazil...was to deprive the colonial population of a balanced and constant supply of fresh and wholesome foodstuffs."[5]

This same scholar also brought to the attention of modern readers the pioneer work of Antonio Pedro de Figueiredo, a teacher, editor, and prolific writer in the state of Pernambuco. Figueiredo's incisive studies of the latifundiary basis of the social and economic exploitation of his region could have done much to alleviate and even to obviate some of the miserable conditions which worsened in the area with the passage of time.[6] However, they went unheeded.

The quasi-feudal agrarian system was not conducive to the rise of strong cities. Indeed, for centuries almost the only urban centers were the few major ports. These served as military and administrative posts and as ecclesiastical and educational centers. The crown

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[5] The Masters and the Slaves, p. 45.

[6] Cf. Freyre, Nordeste, pp. 115-120; T. Lynn Smith, Brazil: People and Institutions, 3rd ed., Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1963, pp. 307, 324-325; and T. Lynn Smith, Agrarian Reform in Latin America, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1965, pp. 67-79.

prohibited major industry, which is necessarily an urban enterprise, and the self-sustaining _fazendas_ left slight opportunity for artesanry in the small towns.

A profound student of urban life in Brazil has observed that the feudalism of the colonial city, represented by the Church and the Crown, was different from that of the rural _senhores_, but that both types of feudalism were opposed to the mercantilists. Many of these latter were Jews and "New Christians"; they were the objects not only of economic rivalry, but of vilification for social and religious motives. Moreover, the capitalistic aspects of the city and of the plantation found themselves inescapably opposed to one another.[7] As the slave-traders and bankers, sugar-brokers and merchants prospered, and as the chief cities grew, their political power increased at the time at which the economic strength and the influence of the great land-owners was on the wane. The War of the Mascates ("merchants," literally "peddlers") in Recife, occurred a century before the opening of the ports and the gaining of independence. Nevertheless, it showed the beginnings of the decadence of the plantation system and of the strength of the urban centers. We now consider briefly the rural decline.

The Decline of the Rural Aristocracy

Gilberto Freyre, who was the first modern Brazilian to give to his countrymen a clear and convincing picture of their colonial heritage -- particularly as concerns the Northeast, an area, gave a clear

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[7] Nelson Omegna, _A Cidade Colonial_, Rio de Janeiro: Livraria José Olympio Editôra, 1961, pp. 274-292.

delineation of the decline of the Northeastern rural aristocracy
during the period of the Empire and up into the present century. His
researches and vision were added to the observations and insights
of a young novelist, José Lins do Rêgo, in the 1930's; the result
was Lins do Rêgo's monumental series of novels which picture the
"cycle of sugar"; Menino do Engenho (1932), Doidinho (1933), Banguê
(1934), O Moleque Ricardo (1935), and Usina (1936).

The final title in the series just cited refers to the usina, or
modern sugar mill, which replaced the old-fashioned animal-powered
engenho, and symbolized the modernization of the entire process of
sugar production. The major consequence of this process was the
amassing of vast land-holdings by large impersonal corporations, and
the disruption of centuries-old patterns of rural life. The collection
of articles and lectures by Freyre called Região e Tradição, and
principally the lengthy chapter, "Aspectos de um Século de Transição no
Nordeste do Brasil" (1925), presents in massive scope, and also by
the intimate glow of the oil lamp, the life of that self-contained
society as it was broken open and dispersed by economic, technological,
and social changes in Brazil and in the wider world.[8]

Abolition was the final blow to the plantation-owners of the
Northeast. The preponderance in agricultural production was already

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[8] Gilberto Freyre, Região e Tradição, Rio de Janeiro: Livraria
José Olympio Editôra, 1941. José Lins do Rêgo, in his preface to
this volume, describes Freyre's catalytic intellectual and personal
influence upon him, his conception of Brazilian social history, and
his creative presentation of it in the novels.

swinging to the coffee growers of the South; even railroads were being built into the coffee-producing area. The South was able to withstand the drastic change in labor supply at the expense of the Northeastern littoral. Being in a prosperous stage of development, it could even import the blacks no longer usable in the North.

Thus there was developed, particularly in the state of Sao Paulo, a more rationally capitalistic agriculture, with a new kind of aristocracy, characterized by absenteeism from the land. It was far more extensively involved in the urban capitalistic enterprises than had been the previous landed aristocracies in Brazil. Concurrently with these economic developments of the late nineteenth century, and as a part of them, the South was being strengthened by an increasing immigration of Europeans, no longer composed of single, adventurous men, as was so largely the case with the earlier Portuguese colonists, but with families predominating. In this era, then, the modernization and prosperity of the South were in full swing, in part at the expense of the declining North and Northeast. The increasing social and economic imbalances which resulted were to be associated later with the differential acceptance and growth of Spiritism.

Certain aspects of the colonial society itself appear to be associated with the preparation of the socio-cultural conditions which were later to be found propitious for the acceptance of Spiritism by many Brazilians. These aspects may be summarized as follows:

1. The dispersion and isolation of the population led to high rates of illiteracy and ignorance, and to a high degree of individualism. Such traits are harmonious with the nature of those social groups

which tend to personalize and spiritualize the numerous otherwise unexplained circumstances and forces which so often envelope our frail human existence.

2. Exploited groups tend to seek within the world of the unseen those portions of reality which are concerned with values and social dynamics. This was the case with the slaves and many lower-class whites in Brazil.

3. The endemic malnutrition, featured in the writings of Freyre, has been a major cause of poor health and high morbidity and mortality rates. It has thus been associated with a morbid fatalism on the one hand, and with the credulous dependence upon "natural" medicines and treatment, and magical practices on the other.

4. The organization of the slave society was such that much of the culture of its lowest elements, especially the religious and superstitious beliefs, was transmitted to the members of the higher classes, particularly during their formative years.

Other facets of the colonial society, related to these, are discussed in separate chapters.

Influences of Liberal European Thought Upon Brazilian Society

In this section we examine certain European intellectual and social movements of the nineteenth century and the expression which some of them received in Brazil after they had spread to that country. Our particular interest is directed to certain affinities of these movements with the doctrinal system of Spiritism and to their role

in the development of a socio-intellectual _milieu_ conducive to
the acceptance and spread of that system in Brazil.

The Prominent Role of French Culture in Brazilian Life

In the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, as the
political hold of Portugal upon Brazil grew more tenuous, the contacts
of the latter with other European countries increased. The comparative
backwardness of what had been grandly known as the Metropolis became
apparent, and was a source of shame to many Brazilians.[9] Gilberto
Freyre mentions several of the various accounts which have been
offered of the origin of the expression, "_para o inglês ver_" ("to
impress the English"). Whatever its source, the phrase expresses
the eagerness with which Brazilians adopted European fashions, archi-
tecture, flowers and gardens (disdaining their own orchids), street-
lighting, and all manner of other social and cultural traits.[10]
French ways, in particular, were the objects of emulation, and it
was largely through the medium of French culture that German Romanti-
cism and English scientific thought were transmitted to the intel-
lectuals of Brazil.

In the nineteenth century, many scions of wealthy Brazilian
families were sent to Paris rather than to the University of Coimbra,

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[9] It was equally embarassing to many Portuguese. Cf., for example,
the chronicles and novels of Portugal's greatest writer, Eca de
Queiroz (late nineteenth century) in which Paris is exalted as the
center of culture and Lisbon is despised.

[10] Gilberto Freyre, _The Mansions and the Shanties_, New York:
Alfred A. Knopf, 1963, pp. 203-230; cf. also José Honório Rodrigues,
The Brazilians, Their Character and Aspirations, Austin: University
of Texas Press, 1967, pp. 43, 45.

where not a few of their forebears had studied. Just as artisans were
brought from Europe to construct the lavish buildings and begin small
industries of high quality, so also tutors were imported from France,
to turn out more polished young gentlemen and ladies. "They learned
to speak and think French," recounts an outstanding student of
Brazilian culture.[11] He notes that Brazilian law was based on the
Code of Napoleon, and that generations of educated Brazilians were
expected to be conversant with French philosophy, political writings,
and literature. During this period, many Brazilian authors wrote in
French, not merely out of dilettantism, but for the practical reason
that their works could more easily be published and find acceptance
among Brazilians in that language. For example, important works of
Raimundo Nina Rodrigues, the great student of the slave trade and the
Negro in Brazil, had to be translated from the French in order to be
made available to later generations of Brazilians.[12]

The royal family itself took the lead in this borrowing of cul-
ture. Basílio de Magalhães, a social historian, has described the
liberal, unorthodox beliefs held by the young emperor, Pedro II, be-
liefs which he shared with and encouraged among the young intellectuals

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[11]Emilio Willems, "Brazil," in Arnold J. Rose, Institutions in
Advanced Societies, Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1958,
p. 536.

[12]In 1954, at a Rotary Club meeting attended by this writer in a
Brazilian town, a greeting card from a sister club in France was read
aloud with great difficulty by the secretary, amid the hilarity of his
fellows. None of them could have done better, but almost any of them
could have read such a card in English. Half-a-century before, or less,
the reading of such a greeting would have been a normal effortless
occurrence.

who were attracted to him. His enthusiasm for, and active patronage
of, the philosophic and scientific activity of his age made him a
convinced evolutionist, while the liberalism which he imbibed from
the French appealed to his kindly nature; he espoused a gentle, uni-
versalist deism, and its influence added greatly to the spirit of
the times -- the falling away from the old orthodoxies.[13]

Although they did produce a few such gifted spirits as Dom Pedro
II, such conditions bode ill for the development of a genuinely
Brazilian intellectual life. The depletion of the country's educa-
tional system after the expulsion of the Jesuits, which is traced
in broad strokes by Fernando de Azevedo,[14] had left in its wake a
sterile parasitism, incapable of adapting to its own realities even
the intellectual products of others. João Cruz Costa observes that
various ideas were uncritically "grafted" onto the vine of European
thought which itself had been thrust into the soil of Portuguese
culture: "From Paris came doctrines and theories swallowed wholesale
and ill-digested by the sybaritic intellectuals of the upper classes."[15]

In the final part of this chapter, we note the beginnings of a
new intellectual movement in Brazil toward the end of the nineteenth
century. At the present juncture, we turn to the contributions medi-
ated through the contact with French intellectual life.

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[13]Cf. Basílio de Magalhães, Estudos de História do Brasil, São
Paulo: Companhia Editôra Nacional, 1940, pp. 151-155.

[14]Op. cit., pp. 355-363.

[15]João Cruz Costa, History of Ideas in Brazil, Berkeley: Uni-
versity of California Press, 1964, p. 49.

Intellectual Movements in France Which Influenced Brazil

Four intellectual movements in France were particularly influential in preparing the way for Spiritism in Brazil. These are rationalism, eclectism, occultism and other marginal movements, and Positivism.

1. Rationalism. The philosophical and the social movements which shook Europe in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries were fundamentally influenced by the extreme rationalism which had its focus in England and France. The rationalist emphasis -- personified in Voltaire -- brought humanistic norms to the fore, and was accompanied by the insistence upon the exercise of individual liberty. A major effect of it was the inevitable weakening of the hold of social institutions, particularly the institutions of religion.[16]

This rationalism was often superficial and academic, as is illustrated in its relationship to one of the above-named elements: liberty. Hans Kohn cites Ernest Renan's warning, in 1858, against "a liberalism, which pretends to base itself on the principles of reason alone and thinks it does not need tradition"; and Kohn draws the contrast between France and England, where liberty had deep historical roots.[17] In both France and Brazil the social structures were lacking

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[16]Cf. W.E.H. Lecky, History of the Rise and Influence of the Spirit of Rationalism in Europe, London: Watts and Company, 1946 (first published 1865), passim; and Ernst Robert Curtius, The Civilization of France, trans. Olive Wyon, New York: Macmillan, 1932, pp. 125-145.

[17]Hans Kohn, Making of the Modern French Mind, Princeton: D. Van Nostrand Company, 1955, p. 35.

which might give adequate support to libertarian regimes. In Kohn's phrase, "'Liberty' was a rational demand, not a way of life."[18]

From such a rationalist stance, Henri Saint-Simon attempted to establish a principle upon which to base society. His answer to the search for something to replace "outmoded Christianity" as a functional basis for the social order, as "true religion," was the philosophy of the science of his age. Saint-Simon was only one among many. "His application of the law of 'universal gravity' to all phenomena [including the societal]...was only an exaggeration of a widespread belief among his contemporaries," the belief that there could be found an efficacious monistic social principle.[19]

2. Eclecticism. The rationalism of the French could not be identified with the exercise of cold logic. In addition to being Gallic in origin, it had been exposed to the rosy light of nineteenth-century German philosophy and was deeply colored with its Romantic optimism. Romanticism is characterized by Roger Picard in the following manner: "lyricism, a philosophical spirit, a belief in the people, and a universal piety."[20]

Eclecticism is a familiar child of Romanticism, and by the 1830's, under the name of "Spiritualism," it was the quasi-official philosophy

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[18]Ibid.

[19]Frank E. Manuel, The New World of Henri Saint-Simon, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1956, pp. 21-25.

[20]Cruz Costa, op. cit., p. 50.

in France. Cruz Costa notes that the philosopher Taine referred to philosophy as "the affectionate and indispensable ally of religion," and to Eclecticism as "preparatory faith which allowed Christianity to retain its dogmas and its hold on humanity."[21]

Through the neglect of philosophical, Biblical, and theological studies, Brazilian philosophy and theology were almost bereft of any sure foundational principles and intellectual criteria. The introduction of Eclecticism as the philosophy of the Church by Domingos Gonçalves Magalhães met with little resistance. It was a conservative philosophy, admirably fitted to the tastes of the "slipper aristocracy." Its undisciplined mixing of ideas appealed to such mentally lethargic ecclesiastics as the verbose monk Mont'Alverne (Brazil's foremost religious orator), who "parrotted gross eclecticism," as Euclydes da Cunha put it.

The anarchic nature of eclectic philosophies, which leave the selective principles and criteria to the individual, is illustrated by the fate of Eclecticism in Brazil. There was little unity of concern and commitment among the Brazilian products of the Sorbonne and Montpellier, and little that was unifying and constructive in their mental baggage. Pessoa de Moraes gives the following description: "the young university graduate, coming home...with a degree in law or medicine...mathematics or philosophy, brought...social ideas which proceeded from the bourgeois and liberal individualism that had broken

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[21]Ibid., p. 53.

out in France."[22]   To large numbers of these young men, the doctrines, like the wines they had known in France, produced only a heady feeling, and confirmed them in the assertion of their own privileges; they were left perfectly at home with the conservatism of their fathers and the empty pedantry of Friar Mont'Alverne.

Others among them, largely of bourgeois origins, did imbibe the principles and sentiments that made them leaders of the abolitionist, anti-clerical, republican movement that was victorious in 1888-89. We return to them in the final portion of this section.

One of the introducers of Eclecticism to Brazilian readers focused his philosophical views through the lens of pragmatic social concern. He was A.P. Figueiredo, educated not in Paris but in Recife, who at an early age had translated writings of the eclectic Victor Cousin, including Cousin's popularizations of German Romanticism and John Locke.[23] Figueiredo also came under the influence of a French civil engineer named Louis Vauthier. The latter spent six years in Recife, on public works projects which he designed to modernize and -- as he hoped -- to humanize the city. This was during the formative period of Figueiredo's intellectual life (1840-46), and there is no doubt that he received much from the idealistic engineer. This

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[22]Pessoa de Moraes, Sociologia da Revolução Brasileira, Rio de Janeiro: Editôra Leitura, S.A.., 1965, p. 29. (The present writer has observed that this is a paraphrase of a long passage by Gilberto Freyre.)

[23]On A.P. Figueiredo, cf. T. Lynn Smith, "Some Notes on the Life and Work of A.P. Figueiredo," West Georgia College Studies in the Social Sciences, Vol. VI, no. 1 (June, 1967), pp. 119-126; and Gilberto Freyre, Um Engenheiro Francês no Brasil, Rio de Janeiro: Livraria José Olympio Editôra, 1961, pp. 93-98, 123-146.

association and his own studies gave young Figueiredo an unparalleled understanding of the social and economic problems which were related to the mal-distribution of the rights to the land, improper taxation, and similar socio-economic factors. Lamentably, Figueiredo was almost unique; it is also unfortunate that his profounder concepts were linked in the minds of his opponents to the extremes of Fourierism. However, his definitions of and solutions to the problems of land and society in Northeastern Brazil would have been unacceptable in any case to the holders of power.

Many of his contemporaries who were rising on the intellectual, economic, and political scene were either too individualistically oriented or too much a part of the existing social system to visualize, in the pragmatic fashion of Vauthier and Figueiredo, the practical application, at the roots of society, of the scintillating social ideas which accompanied their luggage from Paris.

3. _Heterodox religionists and occultists_. A historian of social thought and religion has shown the relationship of this general intellectual orientation to unorthodox religious behavior. He demonstrates that although phenomena of the "spiritualistic" type do have a universal appeal, occultism was unusually congenial to the spirit of the nineteenth century. It allied itself with the belief in progress and human perfectibility, and was in harmony with the eclectic philosophy of such men as Victor Cousin. It advocated a vague humanitarianism, and was associated with the promotion of feminine egalitarianism and with attempts to find the "universal religion."[24]

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[24]D.G. Charlton, _Secular Religions in France_, London: Oxford University Press, 1963, pp. 127-142.

The same author goes on to cite several who attempted to unite science and illuminism, among them: Joseph de Maistre, in Soirées de Saint-Pétersbourg; F. A. Mesmer, with his magnetism; Allan Kardec, in the codification of Spiritism; Eliphas Levi, with his theistic positivism; Michelet, producer of La Bible de la Humanité; Balzac, especially through his classic character, Louis Lambert, in Comédie Humaine; and the new illuminist schismatic "churches." "Religious aspiration mingled with reverence for science," says Charlton, "here is one of the mainsprings of the age's thought, manifested in Balzac and some at least of the occultists as much as in more abstract and saner thinkers."[25]

The European thinker who exercised by far the greatest direct influence upon the intellectual life of Brazil, however, was Auguste Comte, and we note briefly the place of his Positivism in Brazilian life and thought.

4. Comte and positivistic humanism. Auguste Comte, who had served as secretary to Saint-Simon, had absorbed the monistic spirit and the intransigent rationalism of his master. In an age and a nation tossed about on uncertain social, political, and intellectual waves, Comte produced a sweeping formula of secular humanism, scientific synthesis, and social betterment. This system was soon found to be attuned to the yearning spirit of many ambitious young Brazilians. The cold and exact hand of science, freed from the fumbling of theological and metaphysical searches, must also be warmed and softened

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[25] Ibid., p. 135.

by human feelings, said Comte. Referring to the failure of "Theology

and war" as attempted solutions to the problem of human-kind, he

summarized the need for his religion of mankind as follows:

> All the previous convictions of men, whether of the re-
> volutionary or retrograde school, lost their hold. If
> discipline is partial it cannot be real and lasting. If
> it is to be universal, it must rest on one principle --
> the constant supremacy of the heart over the intellect.
> But this principle has been increasingly disbelieved since
> the Middle Ages...Even in the evolution of science, the
> provisional order which Bacon and Descartes had tried to
> establish disappeared in the empirical rush of the dis-
> persive specializations, which blindly refused any philo-
> sophical synthesis...Each discipline has tried to extend
> itself without limits, becoming more and more isolated
> from any recognizable whole....
>
> By allowing complete dominion to the human point of view,
> a subjective synthesis was able to construct a totally
> unshakeable philosophy. This led to the founding of the
> final religion, as soon as the leap to new moral heights
> had completed my mental renovation....
>
> The positive progress [of Humanity] is finally seen to be
> capable of satisfying all of the intellectual and social
> demands...In all of life the relative succeeds irrevocably
> to the absolute; altruism tends to dominate egoism; and a
> systematic march takes the place of spontaneous evolution.
> In a word, Humanity is permanently substituted for God....[26]

The iconoclastic austerity symbolized by the motto, "Order and

Progress," found enthusiastic followers in Brazil. In the early 1850's

several scientific and mathematical treatises were published by men

from northern provinces who had come under the influence of the Posi-

tivist system. The strict systematization and the scientific approach

of Positivism found ready acceptance among the instructors and students at

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[26]Auguste Comte, <u>Catecismo Pozitivista, ou Sumária Espozição da Religião Universal</u>, trans. and notes by Miguel Lemos, Rio de Janeiro: Templo da Humanidade, 1934, pp. 445-448.

the Central Technical School and the Military School, both located in Rio de Janeiro.[27]

The religious fervor with which many of these men embraced Positivism is illustrated in the letters of Benjamin Constant Botelho de Magalhães, written to his wife from the Paraguayan battle-front in the early 1860's. As professor in the Military School after the war, this "molder of men" was strongly instrumental in forming a generation of men inspired by the ideals of Auguste Comte -- a generation which contributed considerably to the downfall of the Empire and the formation of the Republic. Benjamin Constant was not a follower of the anti-religious French positivist Littré, as were many of his fellow-officers. Neither did he share the near-fanatical religious persuasion of the disciples of Pierre Lafitte, under whom the Positivist Apostolate came into being. This latter group, led in Brazil by Miguel Lemos and the "saint" of Positivism, Teixeira Mendes, channelled most of its zeal into disputes with Lafitte over doctrine and polity, finally cutting itself off from the leadership of Paris.

Positivism spread through the "new bourgoisie," principally through those members of it whose professions brought them in close touch with physics, chemistry, biology, and mathematics. These professors, doctors, and military men were drawn to Positivism for several reasons: (1) they had little patience with the empty

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[27]For fully documented treatment of Positivism in Brazil, with exhaustive bibliogrpahy, cf. Ivan Lins, História do Positivismo no Brasil, São Paulo: Companhia Editôra Nacional, 1964; and Cruz Costa, op. cit., Ch. 5, "The Advent of Positivism," pp. 82-182.

verbosity of the spiritualistic Eclectic philosophy; (2) Positivism

offered opportunity for a rationalized commitment, important to men

reared in an atmosphere of religiosity but upon whom religion had lost

its hold; (3) the moral appeal of "The Religion of Humanity" was

actually based upon their traditional values, but now it was in a form

more acceptable to their high position in the social scale; (4) Posi-

tivism offered the "order" and the "progress" of which their republican-

ism felt the need -- and which they later incorporated as the motto

on the new Brazilian flag, and; (5) there was also a growing dissatis-

faction with the sterile educational process, which was heavily in-

fluenced by encyclopedism.

Although the Apostolate was the only group which considered itself

to constitute the official Positivist movement, it was extremely small

in number; the majority of Positivists in Brazil belonged to no such

organization. Nevertheless, most of the adherents of Comte's movement,

whether official members or not, took a firm stand against slavery and

for the improvement of the educational system. In general they were

morally self-righteous. Their intransigence -- particularly that of

Miguel Lemos -- "against sin" led the Positivist Apostolate into the

advocacy of a rigid type of social control which was tantamount to a

political dictatorship. When the republic did come, in November, 1889,

the Positivists involved in its establishment were those led by Benajmin

Constant; only after two days did the official movement give its ad-

herence to the new regime. Immediately, however, it attempted to

pontificate concerning the organization of the new government. Lemos

and his followers had little success in such a practical political

matter. Constant was able to work for two short years at a radical reform of the educational system, only to see the results of his work largely disperse within a brief time. From this period on, Positivism, as a movement, steadily lost headway in Brazil. Even to the present, however, Comte's philosophy is admired by many Brazilians and has permeated the intellectual atmosphere shared by all of them.

Positivism and Spiritism

In a phrase which is almost an aside, Fernando de Azevedo has alluded to an aspect of the career of Positivism in Brazil which is most illuminating for our study of Spiritism: he speaks of "Positivism, a philosophy which aborted and became a system of morality and religion in Brazil...".[28] We have seen how almost the same words can be said of Spiritism. During the last thirty years of the nineteenth century the controversy raged among Spiritists as to whether the movement was, and should be developed as, a philosophy/science or a religion. Indeed, the major task of Bezerra de Menezes within the Federação Espírita Brasileira, both politically and through doctrinal exposition, was to assure its continuance as a religion,[29] and the institutionalized religious branch led by him did, in fact, dominate.

Positivism, on the other hand, as an intellectual movement to be reckoned with by all educated persons, was accepted by most of its adherents on philosophical and pragmatic/scientific grounds, albeit,

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[28]Op. cit., p. 270.

[29]Cf. pp. 131-132, infra.

as in the case of Benjamin Constant, often with religious fervor. As
an institutionalized religious movement it made its appeal to a
moralistically self-conscious intellectual elite which fought a stri-
dent but losing verbal battle for the determination of the directions to
be taken by the republic. Although both positivistic movements -- the
"official" and the unorganized -- were patronizing to the lower classes,
Miguel Lemos and Teixeira Mendes were patently insensitive to the human
needs of the poor. Paradoxically, while they rejected the folk theism
and the Virgin-centered hagiolatry of the masses of the people, these
Positivist priests partook of their own humanistic sacraments beneath
the portrait of Clothilde de Vaux.

The academism of large numbers of the followers of both Positivism
and Spiritism led these two groups to follow generally the culturally-
patterned tendency to identify the verbalization of problems with their
solutions. For example, Miguel Lemos wrote in 1890, concerning Auguste
Comte: "...in 1885 a French philosopher resolved all the great problems
on which depend the integration of the working classes into modern
society."[30] And yet the Positivists, as a social elite, were able in
only a few cases to give concrete form to their verbal solutions of
human problems. It was partly because of this that their influence
waned. On the other hand Spiritism, through the victories of Bezerra de
Menezes and the religionists, was maintained on the popular level of
mysticism and healing, even though its doctrinal preachments might have
seemed hollow and pedantic to many. This enabled it to remain within
the mainstream of folk piety, even under the heavy religious, legal, and

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[30]Cruz Costa, op. cit., p. 152.

social sanctions of institutional Roman Catholicism; it also associated Spiritism, as we note elsewhere in greater detail, with the growing national consciousness.

One further consideration is important for our analysis of Spiritism. João Cruz Costa cites the observation of Manuel Bonfim that Positivism seemed to confer upon its disciples "a tone of sovereign and absolute self-sufficiency...[which] gives them the privilege of infallibility; they have a solution for everything, an answer for every question."[31] Cruz Costa goes on to reflect upon the inflexibility of the Positivists as possibly symbolizing the anxiety of the Brazilian people, who seek the cures for their ills and problems through the application of a single, all-resolving formula. Again, at the close of the lengthy treatment of Positivism, this historian of philosophy is drawn ruminatively to the question of the role of this movement in Brazilian society. He finds no "clear or cogent justification" for the course which Positivism has run through modern Brazilian history; it has certainly not made great philosophical contributions. This author then expresses agreement with Otto Maria Carpeaux, that Brazilian Positivism is a "symbol of deeper realities"; he feels that there is an intangible but deep relationship between this doctrine and the formative factors in Brazilian society, a "compatibility with our formative influences and the most profound verities of our spirit."[32]

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[31] Ibid., p. 148.

[32] Ibid., p. 182.

An important key to this compatibility may well be that the positivisitic orientation which has permeated much of Brazilian higher education since the latter part of the nineteenth century is of a piece with that which was absorbed by such philosophers and occultists as those referred to by Donald Charlton, cited above,[33] including Allan Kardec. A scientism was created which itself carried something of the mystical, and which had affinities with the individualistic voluntarism so common to the Brazilian spirit; the infusion of it into generations of professional men, teachers, journalists, administrators, and other middle-class dealers in ideas prepared a fertile field for the acceptance of a movement such as that of Kardec, with its combined humanitarian, scientistic, and religious appeal.

Intellectual Aspects of the Rise of the Bourgeois Elite

In the preceding pages the growth of an educated bourgeois elite in nineteenth-century Brazil has been apparent. This was associated with a literary, intellectual, and social awakening which occurred in the 1860's and which was largely the result of the liberal European influence. New departures in letters, technology, politics, and economic activity were associated with the development of a mental activity which was, in the words of Antonio Candido, "the first coherent expression in the literary and philosophical fields, of a bourgeois ideology in Brazil."[34]

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[33]P. 172, supra.

[34]Cruz Costa, op. cit., p. 181.

This ideology expressed the breaking away from aristocratic tradition, on the part of young men educated in the schools which were being established in Brazil. Many of them, lacking the means to study abroad, studied at the state-supported Central Technical School and Military School, and were influenced by Benjamin Constant and his contemporaries. Although opposed to the land-owning aristocracy, they were moving up in the socio-economic scale, and saw themselves as the formers of a new elite. Moreover, cultural norms were deeply ingrained, and detailed, empirical study smacked too much of the manual labor they had been conditioned to disdain. Pragmatic philosophical concepts had no basis in every-day experience. Further, encyclopedism still heavily influenced their educational system, and they lacked a solid basis for intellectual and empirical synthesis of the masses of academic knowledge they had accumulated.

Fernando de Azevedo refers to the more alert among them as "agitators of ideas like Tobias Barreto,...a restless and combative spirit within whom there succeeded, depending upon the period, a spiritualist, a positivist, a metaphysician, and even a materialist."[35] Such men were more fascinated by rhetoric and the play of ideas than by the attempts at philosophical synthesis, empirical verification, and the pragmatic application of knowledge.

This condition continued to exist in the present century. Gilberto Amado, in the period of World War I, analyzing such basic flaws in modern Brazilian intellectual life, observed that there had been no change

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[35]Op. cit., p. 269.

of direction in the educational system in the move from the monarchy to the republic. The educational system was developed, in the phrase of Amado, "outside of reality"; it did not prepare students for the needs and tasks which their nation faced, but for an unreal existence. The search for a magical "key of Solomon," continuing since long before the days of Eclecticism, still persisted.[36]

The adherence to new heterodoxies such as Spiritism is very likely to occur among social groups which are typified by the new middle classes discussed here. These groups have been exposed not only to rapid shifts in social rank and status but to mental stresses caused by the shifts in the bases of intellectual activity. One of the variables in this process is the factor to which Gilberto Amado has referred; that is, an intellectualism relatively unrelated to its social and technological environment, but which has continued to attempt to solve the problems of existence through intellectual and verbal exercises. The presence of a bourgeois elite in which such an intellectualism is common appears to be related to the uniqueness of the Brazilian situation in its widespread adoption of Spiritism as an intellectual-religious option.[37]

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[36]Gilberto Amado, "A Chave de Salomão," in Três Livros, Rio de Janeiro: Livraria José Olympio Editôra, 1961, p. 242.

[37]The writer had the privilege of discussing this and related subjects for several hours with a man who holds the rank of general in the Brazilian Army and the Ph.D. degree in electronics from a major American university. The views of this man concerning intellectual life and the attitude toward scientific endeavor among Brazilians are essentially those presented here. He was educated in Protestant schools in Brazil, but professed no religion, only expressing preference for Protestantism; his wife, an intelligent woman with secondary education, is an avid Spiritist.

CHAPTER VII

SOCIETAL FACTORS RELATED TO THE SPREAD OF SPIRITISM

IN MODERN BRAZIL

In the present chapter are indicated the relationships of Spiritism and its rise, with three major factors of change in modern Brazilian society: the family, increased vertical social mobility, and the growth of urbanization with its accompanying changes in occupational structure.

Spiritism and the Changing Structure

And Functions of the Family

It has been well established in the works of Gilberto Freyre, T. Lynn Smith, Fernando de Azevedo, Thales de Azevedo, and others that the distinctive and most powerful motivating features of Brazilian civilization are to be found in the structures and dynamics of its familial systems.

It is therefore crucial in this study of Spiritism for us to examine the main currents of Brazilian family life. Of particular importance are the changes in the family which have occurred at an increasingly rapid pace over the past one hundred years. It is our purpose to examine here the relationships of Spiritism, as a socio-religious movement, to these changes in the structure and functions of the family and in its relationships to other societal institutions.

The Importance of the Extended Family

The fundamental place of the extended family in Brazilian society has long been recognized; T. Lynn Smith has drawn attention to the distinctive manner in which it has carried out the biological, social, and

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and economic functions.[1] The recognition of these distinctive features by the Jesuits is shown by Azevedo. He describes the manner in which their struggle to control the landowners' families through education contributed to their expulsion from the country in 1759.[2] Gilberto Freyre's epochmaking study of the aristocratic _senhor de engenho_ and his plantation family demonstrates how this type of domestic unit developed: it grew out of a high degree of concentration in the ownership and control of the land, and, indeed, an aristocratic control of the entire slaveholding societal organization.[3] The master's absolute control over many women, involving concubinate and sexual promiscuity, was tempered by his sentimental attachment to their numerous progeny. Rarely was a child disowned, though he might have no legal status in the family.

In view of the isolation of the plantations, the despotic control of the patriarch was facilitated -- often necessitated -- by his function as the final arbiter of justice in his domain. Isolation and family control of lands made also for close intermarriage among the leading families, and even within them, as has so often occurred in our own Southland and in similar plantation societies.

Despite the master's maintenance of his illegitimate children within the household and family, the number of legitimate heirs was usually

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[1] T. Lynn Smith, _Brazil: People and Institutions_, 3rd. ed., Baton Rouge: Louisana State University Press, 1963, pp. 460-461.

[2] Fernando de Azevedo, _Brazilian Culture_, trans. William Rex Crawford, New York: Macmillan, 1950, pp. 334-338.

[3] Gilberto Freyre, _The Masters and the Slaves_, trans. Samuel Putnam, 2nd English ed., rev., New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1963, passim.

too large for all to participate in the inheritance of the land. In
the absence of a law of primogeniture, Azevedo, citing Pedro Calmon,
describes the common solution to this problem:

> According to a tradition of Portuguese families, on the
> model of which the patriarchal family in the Colony was
> shaped, the sons took three roads or careers, "not
> rarely," as Calmon reminds us, "after many goings and
> comings ending in the same family house which was the
> inheritance of the oldest." He, the heir, followed the
> path of the father, the second the career of the literary
> man, [with study in Europe]..., and the third entered the
> church taking his vows at fifteen in the convent, or in
> a college or donning the cassock in a seminary. "His
> pious mother made him into a priest."[4]

T. Lynn Smith has noted this process, in which was implicit "the
gradual debasing of persons born in the upper classes," for whom those
classes afforded no place.[5] Those who gradually lost much of their
upper-class status in this manner could still proudly bear traditional
names and expect cousinly patronage from aristocratic kinsmen. They
remained members of clans which, according to Oliveira Vianna, were
the most cohesive and powerful "social blocks" of the era.[6]

A further, and effective, means of maintaining what Freyre termed
"genuine clans," was the compadrio, the godfather system. Under it even
the poor and servile, who could not be joined to the family of the
master by marriage, could yet have him in a patronly manner "baptize"
their child. To have the senhor de engenho stand up with them as god-
father at the baptism signified, in former times, acceptance of certain

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[4]Op. cit., p. 335.

[5]Smith, op. cit., p. 7.

[6]F. J. Oliveira Vianna, Evolução do Povo Brasileiro, Sao Paulo:
Monteiro Lobato e Cia., n.d., pp. 66 ff.

genuine obligations concerning the maintenance and the future of the

child and created yet another bond of loyalty and mutual responsibility

between the compadres who were, in this case, the lord of the planta-

tion and the humble couple.

With authority vested in personality more than in principle, some

of the foundations for the individualism and for the decentralization

of Brazilian society were laid within the social order. Rodrigues gives

expression to an oft-commented element of Brazilian life: "Attachment

to individual personalities is the dominant feature of Brazilian public

and political relations."[7]

This type of paternalism and familism is evinced in the spread of

Spiritism and in the life of its local groups in several ways. In some

of the heavily Spiritist small towns and rural areas, the patriarchal

heads of clan-like families have, on numerous occasions, brought their

families with them into the Spiritist ranks. (The writer has had per-

sonal acquaintance with such cases in Mato Grosso, and they account for

a part of the large Spiritist population of the "Triangle of Minas,"

referred to in Chapter IV.)[8] Another manifestation of the personalism

ascribed by Rodrigues to patriarchal domination is the relatively fre-

quent submission of the members of a group of Spiritists to a dominant

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[7]José Honório Rodrigues, The Brazilians, Their Character and As-
pirations, Austin: University of Texas Press, 1967, p. 46.

[8]For the persistence of the patriarchal extended family today,
among the rural lower classes, cf. Levy Cruz, "Aspectos da Formação e
Desintegração da Familia em Rio Rico, "Sociologia, Vol. 16, no. 4
(Outubro de 1954), pp. 390-412.

personality, even one who has no mediunic gifts or similar charisma. The constant campaign against such _personalismo_ in Spiritist literature is further evidence of its presence. The tendency toward "personality cults" involving outstanding leaders of the movement is perhaps more far-reaching in its possible consequences than the other manifestations mentioned. During the year 1969 -- centenary of the "dis-incarnation" of Allan Kardec -- the Spiritist press has carried articles expressing veneration which borders on the maudlin, tributes with which the phleg-matic founder would have readily dispensed in favor of the propagation of his principles. Nevertheless, the paternalistic mark left upon the character of Brazilian society appears distinctly in the Spiritism of the country.

Changes in the Structure of the Family.

Major changes have occurred, altering the structure of the extended family, and greatly diminishing its patriarchal aspect. (The decline of the aristocratic landholders, basic to these changes, is discussed in Chapter VII.)

One of these changes was the diminution of concubinage and similar practices connected with slavery. Another was the dissolution of the plantation community, which left many workers disoriented. African kin-ship systems had been destroyed, and slaves had often seen little in the example of the masters and chaplains which would internalize in them the values of the monogamous household. Instability has character-ized the families of the lower classes in many areas.[9]

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[9]Cf. Freyre, op. cit., pp. 455-456, and The Mansions and the Shanties, trans. Harriet Onis, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1963, pp. 194-195, Cruz, op. cit., pp. 390-392. See also René Ribeiro,

A major aspect of the changes in the Brazilian kinship structure has been the increasing importance of the nuclear family. Over 30 years ago Wirth explicated the classic thesis that urban life is disruptive of primary relationships, including those of the family, and that the unstable nuclear family prevails in urban centers.[10] It has long been recognized by Thales de Azevedo and others that this has not been true of the upper-class in Brazilian cities, where patriarchal extended families maintain their solidarity;[11] this solidarity is demonstrated in a recent study.[12]

Rosen and Berlinck, testing hypotheses drawn from the theory of Wirth, found an unexpected degree of solidarity in middle class families, those among which Spiritism has its greatest strength. Such solidarity among families of this class, however, is frequently between a few members or conjugal units; it is quite different from participation in an urban upper-class or a rural lower-class clan. In the region of the "São Paulo-Rio de Janeiro axis," particularly, large numbers of middle-class families, embracing only a few conjugal units in any given generation, have maintained close solidarity over long periods of time.

"On the Amaziado Relationship and Other Aspects of the Family in Recife (Brazil)," American Sociological Review, Vol. X, no. 1 (February, 1945).

[10]Louis Wirth, "Urbanism as a Way of Life," American Journal of Sociology, Vol. 44, no. 1 (July, 1938), pp. 1-25.

[11]Thales de Azevedo, "Family, Marriage, and Divorce in Brazil," in Dwight B. Heath and Richard N. Adams, eds., Contemporary Cultures and Societies of Latin America, New York: Random House, 1965, pp. 292-293.

[12]Bernard C. Rosen and Manoel T. Berlinck, "Modernization and Family Structures in the Region of São Paulo, Brazil," América Latina, Ano 11, no. 3 (Julho-Setembro, 1968), pp. 75-96.

The increasing nuclearity of families of this type can be seen in their changing functions, to which we now turn.[13]

Changes in Family Functions

The decline of the landed aristocracy, modern urban-industrial growth, and the widening scope of governmental activity have been major factors in bringing about changes in the functions performed by the family for its members and for the community. In our examination of these changes, we focus upon the middle-class family and note certain relationships between the changes and the role of Spiritism. The areas of functional change which we observe are: reproduction, conferral of status, material sustenance, discipline and socialization, affective support, recreation, and welfare and aid.

1. _Reproduction_. The middle-class is the stronghold of the Roman Catholic Church in the cities; from its ranks come articulate women who campaign for the sanctity of the family and against birth control and divorce. Yet the middle-class family of our time contributes less than formerly to the population growth of the country. These family groups are smaller also because of the decline of the custom, in this social

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[13]This nuclear type family and its solidarity, faced with modern changes, is the subject of a series of novels which has become a modern classic: the Éramos Seis (We Were Six) novels, by Sra. Leandro Dupré. For examples of this type in the nineteenth century, cf. such novels of Machado de Assis as Iaiá Garcia and Dom Casmurro. It was among such families, and within their homes, that the first Spiritist meetings were held in Bahia, Rio de Janeiro, and São Paulo; cf. Pessoa de Moraes, Sociologia da Revolução Brasileira, Rio de Janeiro: Leitura, 1965, pp. 30-36. For the corresponding type in smaller cities of the hinterland of São Paulo, cf. Paulo Setubal, Confiteor (autobiography), São Paulo: Editôra Saraiva, 9th ed., 1958. It appears probable that outlying small towns and cities have contributed large numbers of "practicing" Catholics and Spiritists to the large cities, as has been the case among Protestants in the rural-urban migration in the United States.

class, of taking on by adoption, or simply "to raise," additional children. Increased educational demands, accompanied by great rises in the levels and the cost of living, have been largely responsible for this rational approach to family size.

Although no population data by socio-economic status are available for Brazil, John V. D. Saunders was able, in his study of human fertility in Brazil, to make some rough comparisons of fertility by occupation of the husband. This was done with data for the state of Sao Paulo, from the census of 1950. Social class is reliably indicated by occupation in Brazil. Saunders observed that the index for the number of children residing with their families, among those employed in agriculture and husbandry, was 19.8 points above the state average, while the index for such children among those engaged in the liberal professions was 30.4 points below the state average. This same index indicated low fertility among those engaged in real estate, banking, finance and insurance, and high fertility among persons employed in transportation, communication, and storage, and in the extractive industries.[14] The groups of high and middle socio-economic status, that is, those with lower fertility, are those most likely to adhere to Spiritism.

Saunders includes a reminder of the rural-urban and other differentials which might well account for part of the observed difference between occupational classes. Even so, we may safely say that, whatever the combination of contributing factors, the societal levels in which

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[14]John V. D. Saunders, Differential Fertility in Brazil, Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1958, pp. 75-76.

most Kardec Spiritists are found are those with the smallest mean family size, and that this size has been on the decrease.

The Spiritist movement has no governing body that can make moral and ethical pronouncements which would be binding upon members. Nevertheless, in their belief that birth control is against the laws of Nature and that it upsets the planned scheme of reincarnation. Despite this, it is generally recognized that individual cases may require varying decisions concerning this question. The Spiritist emphasis on rationalization of conduct conflicts here with a deeply held cultural norm which is also supported by Kardecist doctrine. This writer has had occasion to verify in personal interviews that this conflict gives rise to strong feelings of guilt on the part of many Spiritist women.

2. <u>Conferral of status</u>. With the decline of the rural aristocracy, the increase of economic opportunities for mulattoes, and the abolition of slavery, the relative rigidity of the caste-like system was weakened, and status in modern Brazilian society became increasingly based upon achievement. Thus pressures are heavy upon the children of the middle classes and the upper sectors of the working classes to excel and to rise in the social scale. Spiritism entails a far less inclusive and definitive religious commitment than does Protestantism, and by remaining in the cultural mainstream is an increasingly accepted religio-philosophical development. It therefore presents itself more and more as a practicable option for professionals, bureaucrats, and others of some educational and social attainment who no longer accept Roman Catholicism.

Although social standing is decreasingly related to religious affiliation, the tendency is still strong for many Protestants to isolate

themselves from Brazilian society in general because of their disapproval of certain practices which they consider worldly. The Spiritists, on the other hand, share the dominant social and cultural values and practices, and encounter far fewer problems of social integration and ascension, when other factors are held constant.

3. Material sustenance. The urban family, unable to produce its own food and shelter, must depend upon the income, not only of the husband, who frequently holds several jobs simultaneously, but often of the wife. This has been true as far back as the early nineteenth century, particularly in the cases of downward social mobility of men of upper-class families, noted above. Their precarious living as government bureaucrats or professors was often augmented by such decorous activity as that of seamstress, on the part of the wife. Today, wife and daughters may work in business firms and public offices.[15] The children are usually expected to live at home and contribute to the family budget until they marry or are taken away by their careers. Family cohesion is fostered to some extent in this way.

4. Discipline and socialization. The above-mentioned economic factor carries an implicit tendency toward egalitarianism within the family. Since paternal dominance is a cultural ideal, the egalitarian role is difficult or impossible for many men, and implies to them their abdication of authority; the woman is often the psychological main-stay of the family. Sons, in particular, feel their independence as they earn their

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[15]Antonio Candido, "The Brazilian Family," in T. Lynn Smith and Alexander Marchant, eds., Brazil: Portrait of Half a Continent, New York: Dryden Press, 1951, pp. 296-297.

own money and live in an increasingly individualistic and rationalized society. Moreover, as in other modern societies, the functions of socialization are being divided among the family and other agencies, particularly the school. Special pressure is put upon the boys with regard to study, for places in secondary and higher educational institutions are exceedingly hard to obtain. Boys traditionally receive little discipline, and today family authority diminishes at the same time at which many outside controls, in large urban centers, are relatively ineffective. New and more liberal patterns of courtship and mate-choosing have evolved, influenced in part by American films. Not only do employment and educational activities contribute to increased family dispersal, but the home is no longer the scene of social life that it traditionally has been. Young people have circles of social interaction which no longer intersect with those of the older members of the family, and the girls are far less subject than formerly to family scrutiny and supervision. For these reasons, there is a constant and conscious effort on the part of large numbers of such families to maintain and strengthen the ties.[16] Spiritism promotes, often with solemn preachments and exhortations in a traditional moralistic vein, the necessity of family solidarity. It is as yet unclear, however, whether the movement's developing youth and children's programs will strengthen family solidarity, or whether they will be parts of an institutional development that will further remove members from the family as the scene of decisions and activity. Already the center is

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[16]Thales de Azevedo, op. cit., pp. 293-296.

displacing the home as the principal locale of sessions. The extent to which Spiritist institutions will attempt to develop a program of parent-and-child religious education remains to be seen.

5. _Affective support_. The provision of positive emotional attachments and constant, face-to-face, verbalized reinforcement of them is still a part of the ideal, or the "mystique," of the Brazilian family, and exists as a vital aspect of the life of many conjugal families. As apartment-living and other innovations related to family-dispersal increase, "the conjugal family is sometimes the only, and at least the main, group of primary relationships for most Brazilians."[17] By cultural and societal formation, Brazilians tend to be individualistic and familistic, not joiners of clubs. The life of many middle-class and upper-class women has often been extremely lonely, for they have been expected to remain largely in the home, and have had relatively few opportunities for social expression and the forming of friendships. The demands and tensions of urban life, moreover, frequently weaken family solidarity, giving rise to feelings of alienation and guilt. In coping with such problems, common to the middle class in unstable societies, the Spiritist theodicy contains an emotional-rational balance which appeals to those who value their status as educated and self-controlled persons. Moreover, one of the latent functions of meetings such as those in the Spiritist centers is the opportunity which they afford for the forming of friendships based on shared beliefs and values.

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[17]Thales de Azevedo, _Social Change in Brazil_, Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1962, p. 21.

Not least among the appeals of Spiritism are those teaching and medium-
istic activities in which immortality and the survival of loved ones
are emphasized. Communication with the spirits of departed family
members and friends is not the major focus for most adherents, except
quite often in their earliest mediumistic experiences. Nevertheless,
this aspect of Spiritist activity does bring comfort and support to
many adherents, both in their rationalization of the problem of death,
and during times of bereavement and crisis. For these reasons, the
Spiritist center in many cases is a place at which a person receives
sympathetic help in confronting the emotional, disciplinary, and
organizational problems faced by isolated individuals and conjugal
units in a complex and changing social environment.

6. _Recreation_. This function is closely allied to the preceding
one. Brazilians have not traditionally been players of games, nor have
they emphasized sports as have the Anglo-Saxons and others. For adults,
particularly, visiting and conversation, largely within the extensive
network of relatives, filled the leisure hours and focused them upon the
home. Azevedo has compiled a lengthy list of non-domestic and commercial
modes of entertainment which have encroached upon this area of conjugal
family life.[18] Emilio Willems observes that "the pattern of sociability
as found in the Protestant congregations of Latin America, is alien to
the native society, but that it has contributed significantly to the
social development of women."[19] This pattern of "social meetings"

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[18]Azevedo, "Family, Marriage, and Divorce," p. 296.

[19]Willems, _op. cit._, p. 168.

and parties, many of them held in homes, has influenced many Spiritist societies, and to some extent has contributed a recreational function to them.

7. <u>Welfare functions</u>. Smith has called attention, as have Willems and others, to the importance of the family as the principal agency of mutual aid and of protection of the young, the infirm, and the aged.[20] However, it was the very extended nature of the family and its agricultural base, with simple levels of living, which largely enabled it to carry such a welfare burden. Willems observes that, "with reference to the present situation, there appears to exist a close correlation between functional relevance and the extent to which the structural characteristics of the large family have been maintained."[21] It is apparent that these characteristics have been maintained only to a relative extent. Azevedo refers to the manner in which urban patterns of living, and the high cost of them, militate against family welfare solidarity. "Not only do they [young couples] close the walls of their homes around then, excluding relatives, but they also try to limit procreation."[22]

This is one of the major social problems of the Brazilian people today. It constitutes a principal point of contact of Spiritism with the lives of many persons, as they strive, through the ministrations

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[20]Smith, <u>op. cit.</u>, pp. 477-481; Emilio Willems, "A Estrutura da Familia Brasileira," <u>Sociologia</u>, Vol. 16, no. 3 (October, 1954), pp. 327-340.

[21]Willems, <u>ibid.</u>, p. 336.

[22]Azevedo, "Family, Marriage, and Divorce," p. 293.

of local Spiritist groups, to find cures for their sick, asylum for orphaned children and the aged, and relief from their own stresses. It remains to be seen whether such activity will continue to be localized and often ad hoc, or whether Spiritism will produce a body of principles and a program of activity for meeting such problems on the societal level.

Implications for Spiritism of Changes in Social

Mobility and Stratification

In this section we attempt to analyze certain of the changes in social stratification and social mobility that seem to have played significant roles in the rise and development of Spiritism in Brazil.

Pitirim A. Sorokin has given three primary factors which are operative in producing and directing vertical social mobility: demographic phenomena, changes in the social environment, and dissimilarities among individuals.[23] In preceding sections we have indicated how demographic, economic, and societal changes have made for complex processes of social mobility, both upward and downward. At this point we examine the role of vertical mobility in the creation of conditions conducive to a plurality of religions, and to the rise of Spiritism in particular.

The changes in Brazil during the second half of the nineteenth century were the deepest, swiftest, and most far-reaching in the three centuries of the nation's history. A major evidence of transformation in Brazilian society was the very fact these changes were effected largely through the intellectual, political, and economic activity of men from the middle, and even the lower, classes. They represented the

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[23]Pitirim A. Sorokin, Social Mobility, New York: Harper's, 1927, Ch. 14.

bourgeoisie which had risen relatively in the cities as the economic power of the landed aristocracy waned. Many were educated in the new schools and universities of Brazil, instead of in Europe. They were "the expression of a new form of bourgeoisie, opposed to the traditional one generally deriving from the aristocracy...."[24]

The middle class whose rise in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries is described by Gilberto Freyre,[25] Fernando de Azevedo,[26] Oliveira Vianna,[27] and others, was in reality a bourgeois elite. It was composed, in the main, of the large merchants, bankers, doctors, lawyers, and others of similar standing. Despite the fact that their number might include, as Freyre shows, Negroid elements, such groups identified themselves with the upper classes, shunning social contact with shopkeepers, elementary school-teachers, and small white-collar workers. Only later, chiefly after 1930, did the "middle class," in the generally accepted "Western" meaning of the term, make itself felt as a social force.

The early leaders of the Spiritist movement, such as Marshal Quadros and Adolfo Bezerra de Menezes, were members of this bourgeois elite, although they were innovators who often were considered as deviants by their peers. However, it was from the petit bourgeoisie -- teachers,

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[24]João Cruz Costa, A History of Ideas in Brazil, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1964, p. 83.

[25]The Mansions and the Shanties, pp. 3-25, 354-399.

[26]Op. cit., pp. 92-94, 106.

[27]F. J. Oliveira Vianna, op. cit., passim.

shop-keepers, artisans, and others -- and the "white-collar" lower middle class that Spiritism received its numerical strength in the late 1800's; and it grew and flourished with the expansion of that class after 1930.

The Modern Rationalist Bourgeoisie and Religious Plurality

Antonio Candido has described the development of a "bourgeois ideology" toward the end of the nineteenth century.[28] As important as this may have been, a more essential factor in the development of a middle class is the capacity for rational, reasonably autonomous action and the opportunity to take responsibility for managerial decision-making. This was lacking in the case of many free men in Brazil. Even though they were neither masters nor slaves, most of them were not of "middle-class" status, in the sense of the term referred to above. The exceedingly small group of bourgeois elite and independent small entrepreneurs whom we have called the petit bourgeoisie began to increase significantly only with the urban-industrial expansion, which reached full swing in the Vargas era, beginning in 1930. This growing middle-class was and is characterized by rationality, in the Weberian sense, both in its occupational activities -- in which decision-making and responsibility distinguish many of its members from routine workers -- and in its personal existence, in which situations with alternate solutions are rationally faced. Its beliefs also are likely to be intellectualized and therefore secularized to some extent.

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[28]Cruz Costa, op. cit., pp. 155 ff.

Thales de Azevedo, in his discussion of the urban upper and middle classes, indicates the secularization of values.[29] Except as the scene of elaborate weddings, the church occupies relatively little place in the lives of those pertaining to the new wealthy upper sectors and to those in the strata which attempt to emulate them. Moreover, many of the traditionally middle-class families do not feel that the Church is a social necessity. In their pragmatic, privatistic view, other considerations than tradition are able to move them in the search for religious expression, and other institutions than the Roman Catholic Church can be examined. The dictum "Outside the Church there is no salvation" has been replaced by "Tôdas as religiões são boas" ("All religions are good"). The specific meaning attached by many to this latter sentiment is, "Whichever one satisfies me is good for me," and the number of times that Spiritists say of their former religion, "It didn't satisfy," is significant. The bourgeois self-determination of life (so closely associated with Protestantism) calls into question the whole socio-religious structure in which initiative and decision lie in the institutions.

Considerable attention is devoted elsewhere in this study to profound modifications -- and even the weakening and decline -- of some of the components of Brazilian society, domestic, economic, and political. Some of these are due to new and strengthening tendencies in other areas. Nevertheless, more than fifty years ago the perceptive Gilberto Amado

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[29]*Social Change in Brazil*, pp. 67-74.

had discerned certain weaknesses in his country's institutional and class structure:

> In view of the social conditions of Brazil, is it allow-
> able to believe that any change in the institutions can
> have a decisive influence on the well-being of the
> country? ...what is evident is that the social elements
> of the present Brazilian society are the same which exist-
> ed at the end of the Monarchy, with some modifications....
> I think that for the present we cannot link the destiny
> of Brazil to a transformation of institutions which
> would have little influence or none on a population
> which is politically non-existent.[30]

Although this distinguished statesman and man of letters referred principally to political structure, his thought in this selection embraced the entire institutional make-up of Brazilian society in that era; and it was concerned with the social atomization which could even then be verified, in the rise of a rationalist middle and upper class. In recent years, this subject has been investigated sociologically through certain aspects of the politico-economic activity.[31] For the present discussion, the major element of interest in Leeds's investigation of informal organizations in business, politics, and career channels is the underlying condition of the lack of adequate institutional structures, including those which embody norms and sanctions with regard to career and class mobility.

In a society in which religion, family tradition, and social status were closely interrelated, it is not surprising that one

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[30]"The Political Institutions and the Social Milieu in Brazil," (1916), in Três Livros, Rio de Janeiro: Livraria José Olympio Editôra, 1963, p. 242.

[31]Anthony Leeds, "Brazilian Careers and Social Structure: A Case History and Model," Heath and Adams, op. cit., pp. 379-404.

result of the opening of new channels of vertical social mobility and
the rationalization of behavior should contribute to the development of
a plurality of religions.

The Relationship of Color to Status, as It Affects

Spiritist Recruitment

It is common-place knowledge today that color and social class are
very closely related in the society under consideration.

> Stratification into two major hierarchical groups
> and a broad correlation of status to color in a
> system based more on prestige than on pure social
> class has been found to be characteristic of Bra-
> zilian traditional society in general.[32]

Azevedo, in the context from which the above statement is quoted,
describes the manner in which racial discrimination is ideologically
opposed among even the white elites, while at the same time the defi-
nition of social classes in terms of color has persisted. Reference
has already been made to Freyre's demonstration of the rise of the
mulattoes, in The Mansions and the Shanties. It should be remembered
that a large proportion of mestizo men whom Freyre has in mind were the
sons of white landowners, and that they were able to maintain, as much
as to rise to, a social position of respectability which had been provided
for them, along with their higher education, by their fathers.

Thus there was differentiation among the processes and the channels
through which various elements entered or helped to form the bourgeoisie.
The mulattoes in many cases found their places through intellectual

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[32]Thales de Azevedo, Social Change in Brazil, Gainesville: Uni-
versity of Florida Press, 1963, p. 43.

and artistic accomplishment or as managers of family estates. Many whites, particularly the sons of Portuguese Jews, rose by the accumulation of wealth -- symbolized by the magnificence of their town houses; a few whites rose from the ranks of white-collar workers by acquiring training for a profession; and still others were forced down into the bourgeois social class from former aristocratic opulence.

José Honório Rodrigues, in a chapter entitled "Miscegenation and Relations between Brazil's Whites and Africans," has brought together the necessary census and other statistical data and the findings of most of the major students of race in Brazil, in an effort to show the development of the nation as an exemplary "Mestizo Republic."[33] Nevertheless, instead of falling into what T. Lynn Smith has referred to as "the cult of racial equality," Rodrigues recognizes "the ideal of whiteness" which persists to the present time. At the period of Independence, with the country open for manufacture and commerce, there were already large numbers of free mulattoes.[34] Many of these possessed skills or academic instruction, and were candidates for the class of artisans, small merchants, bureaucrats, and teachers, a class which was to grow with increased urbanization, and in which "whiteness" was a distinct asset.

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[33] José Honório Rodriges, Brazil and Africa, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1965, Ch. 4, pp. 52-101.

[34] Frank Tannenbaum, in Slave and Citizen: the Negro in the Americas, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1946, has mentioned the relative ease of manumission in Latin American slavery in contrast to its near-non-existence in that of the English and the North Americans. Rodrigues states that by 1798 there were 400,000 free Negroes in Brazil: The Brazilians, p. 48.

The four southern states, São Paulo, Paraná, Santa Catarina, and Rio Grande do Sul received the lion's share of the white element comprised by immigrants from Europe. Large numbers of these, and particularly the Italians and the Spaniards, were integrated into the lower bourgeoisie. Through industriousness, good marriages, and correct reading of the economic signs of the times, many of them were able to rise in the socio-economic scale, and a few even penetrated, or helped to form, the new upper class.[35] Consequently, such elements, which pertained to the lower classes in their countries of origin, and had no historical master-slave reference of their own, have had a less emotional or ideological prejudice concerning the Negro than have many among the Brazilians of Portuguese descent. However, they share the general assumption of white superiority, and in general have been able to win out in economic competition with the black.

The self-perpetuating inferior status of the major portion of black persons is associated with lower educational and occupational levels. These are major causes of the low proportions of blacks in Kardecist circles.[36]

Spiritism and Social Status

As was indicated in the treatment of Spiritism and its institutions in Chapter IV, relatively few upper class persons are identified with local Spiritist centers. Even so, a large and undetermined number of

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[35]Thales de Azevedo, Social Change in Brazil, pp. 45-50; Richard M. Morse, From Community to Metropolis, Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1958, passim.

[36]In such places as São Paulo, these levels are rising. Cf. p.216 infra.

them "embrace the doctrine," often as assiduous but private students of
Kardec and other Spiritist writers. Many such uncommitted "examinadores"
of Spiritist philosophy are able to avail themselves of passes, cures,
and other ministrations, while maintaining a decorous social distance.
This is usually done by obtaining, in a patronizing manner, private
seances or consultations with well-known, "powerful" mediums. Large
numbers of high government officials, business men, and politicians
seek advice in this way; the present writer has been acquainted with
some of these, as have intimate friends of his.

Even when these mediums are Spiritists in good standing and main-
tain the ethic which forbids remuneration, social distance is often
maintained through financial gifts to the center or its charities.
This may be on a regular basis, as in the case of an "honorary member-
ship." Much of this type of consultation is done with practitioners of
low spiritism -- Umbanda, or white magic; and macumba, or voodoo. Here
the question of social distance is more easily resolved; there are less
apt to be scruples concerning payment, and paradoxically, the humbling
of the high-placed person before the illiterate channel of spiritual
power can be patronizing (a fact well-known to blacks in the United
States).

For the vast majority of believers in Spiritism, however, there is
maintained a continuous, albeit not always conscious, struggle for
the attainment of greater social recognition for their religion. Spirit-
ists are not alone here; the same holds true for most of Brazil's non-
Catholic religions. Individual needs for social recognition are met in
these religious groups. Nevertheless, the need is felt for universal

and respectful recognition of the group, so that it may fulfill the function of linking its members to the greater society.

Such publications as the ANUÁRIO ESPÍRITA give gratuitous evidence of the struggle of the Spiritists for greater social recognition and higher social status.[37] And yet the linking of Spiritism to the names and works of outstanding people in the fields of science, government, literature, and especially entertainment; the assiduous efforts to rename streets and plazas for prominent Spiritists, and to give the maximum of publicity to such legislative actions -- these and other status-seeking activities should not be taken merely as the efforts of a social group to "raise itself" in the public estimation. The issue at stake here is cultural legitimation.

Several aspects of Brazilian social mentality must be borne in mind as we consider this point.[38] First, to be a "good Catholic" or to deny or ignore that "faith of the fathers" -- neither of these positions is intrinsically related to social standing. Positively or negatively, Catholicism is nearly universal, but it is no longer considered essential for membership or special position in the society. Second, by men, anything more than casual interest in religion, and particularly organized

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[37]Cf. supra, p. 147. Closely linked to such efforts were the legal battles such as that engaged in by Adolfo Bezerra de Menezes, while president of the Federação Espírita Brasileira, for the repeal of decrees outlawing Spiritist practices. Such a stigma was not easily erased from the public mind.

[38]The discussion of Thales de Azevedo on "Religion" is helpful at this point (Social Change in Brazil, Ch. 3, pp. 57-81), although much in this section is the fruit of the writer's observation, study and thought over a number of years.

religion, is unusual. Third, the acceptance of religions other than the Roman Catholic as parts of the warp and woof of culture is still very partial and tenuous. Fourth, as is indicated in Chapter III, there is much in Spiritist belief and practice, principally as regards healing and other instrumental functions, and also in terms of the dealings with the spirit world, which is well established in Brazilian culture. This does not imply that all Brazilians believe in all that Spiritism teaches, but it does imply that there is a large core of belief of extremely wide popular acceptance, and that there is much which -- even though it may be disliked or feared -- is nevertheless believed.

Thus while it might seem unnatural for a person to be concerned enough about religious questions to examine and even embrace a "different" (non-Catholic) religion, he would nevertheless be acting within the mores if he took his sick child to a Spiritist center to be healed, or even if he regularly availed himself of Spiritist counsel concerning business matters. In the same way, the counsel of a Protestant minister in a family crisis may be openly sought. Such activities are within the pale of normal conduct in the society. But conversion to the new religion may weaken cultural ties and certain social relationships.

Needless to add, it is largely for such reasons that most of the initial contacts with Spiritism arise out of illnesses and other crises. One negative effect of this circumstance, with regard to the societal view of Spiritism, is that in this way it has become associated in the minds of many with the nervous and emotional disorders to which it so often tries to minister. Even so, among a people for whom traditionally the instrumental effectiveness and the cultural acceptability of a

religion are of more consequence than its doctrinal adequacy, the testi-
mony, "Look what it did for me," is the most effective channel of prop-
agation.

Spiritism thus occupies an ambivalent position in Brazilian
society. It is inhibited by sectarian opposition, emotional and in-
tellectual prejudices, social tradition, and religious inertia. On
the other hand, it is promoted by its claims to cultural legitimacy,
which are greater than those of most aspects of Protestantism, and
even of some features of Roman Catholicism. Moreover, a major source
of its dynamic for expansion has been the rise and development of a
middle social class. For a substantial portion of those of this status,
Kardecism has proved to be efficacious in fulfilling needs related to
religion, group identification and participation, and social status.

Following this consideration of the social aspects of Spiritism
as a middle-class phenomenon, we proceed to consider the occupational
and educational status of its adherents.

Urbanization and Changes in the Occupational Structure

As Related to the Growth of Spiritism

The present section is devoted to the processes of urbanization
and rationalization of Brazilian life, primarily as they are manifested
in the re-distribution of the population, in modifications of the oc-
cupational structure, and in consequent changes in social mobility and
stratification. These are seen as conditions propitious for the rise
of Spiritism.

The Re-distribution of the Population

Aside from the growth of population itself, the most striking
feature of present-day society in Brazil and neighboring countries is

the migration of people to, and their orientation about, urban centers. The beginnings of this migration are not recent; they were present on a significant scale over a century and a half ago, at the time when the Court was being brought from Lisbon to Rio de Janeiro. This change, and others related to it, form the theme of Gilberto Freyre's second major volume. Near the outset of it he observes that the increasing numbers of educated young men were unwilling to return to the patriarchal plantations, preferring to add their culture and talents to the life of the cities. "This was a period of deep differentiation," says Freyre, in which patriarchal domination was on the wane in the rural sector, and disorganization and suffering increased in the cities; it was an epoch of "patriarchalism becoming urbanized."[39]

The attraction of the city was not only for the well-born and the educated. As the ports were opened and the cities took on new functions, rural-urban migration increased. The sons of subsistence farmers, the landless poor, and slaves hired out by their masters came to man the foundries, the construction works, and the shops of cabinet-makers, tinsmiths, and others.[40] As the Europeanization of the cities progressed during the nineteenth century, this tendency remained una-bated, principally in the port cities. After the abolition of slavery, as Oliveira Vianna noted, there was a heavy influx into both coastal

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[39]The Mansions and the Shanties, pp. 23-24.

[40]Cf., ibid.; José Artur Rios, "The Cities of Brazil," in T. Lynn Smith and Alexander Marchant, Brazil: Portrait of Half a Continent, New York: Dryden Press, 1951, pp. 188-207.

and interior cities, not only of those who sought employment, but also of many whose motivation was simply to flee the scene of their enforced servitude.[41]

Although the railroad-building and industrialization which accompanied the growth of the cities began about 1860, the beginning of the Vargas regime in 1930 is the symbolic date of the modern urban-industrial upsurge. Sao Paulo, with 20,000 people in 1870, had grown ten-fold by 1900, and this feat was repeated in the succeeding fifty years. Since 1950 the population again has doubled, and industry in São Paulo has undergone vast expansion. The growth of Recife, representing the relatively non-industrial Northeast, has also been very rapid. The number of its inhabitants has increased by 50 per cent in each of the past three decades. As for the country as a whole, a traditionally rural population had become 45 per cent urban by 1960. Not only the great primate cities, but urban centers of all sizes, had increased in number and in population. Great numbers of people reside in regions and states far from their places of birth.

Changes in Occupational Structure and the Growth of Spiritism

Brazil's traditional primitive, self-sustaining, agricultural economy had provided a very limited number of occupations for the small middle class and the lower classes of the urban centers. Small merchants, administrative bureaucrats, professional men, teachers, priests, and certain artisans -- these and a few others comprised the middle class.

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[41] F.J. Oliveira Vianna, op. cit., pp. 92 ff.

As was first indicated, in Chapter IV, it was among such people that Kardecism was introduced into Brazil, and its widest acceptance has continued to be among them. For this reason, the spread of Spiritism has depended, to a large degree, upon the expansion of the middle classes. Even though there are few statistical data concerning any aspect of Spiritist organization and activity until recent years, certain inferences are forced upon us by well-known facts.

In the first place, as has been indicated, the practice of Kardecism demands not only functional literacy, but the mental disposition to study and to rationalize over beliefs. In Brazilian society, literates of this type have been found almost exclusively in the urbanized areas. Secondly, however, elementary and even secondary education has been made increasingly available to the lower strata of society in these areas. Higher educational levels for more people have been made necessary by the growth of technology and bureaucracy.[42]

There has thus been rapid growth of those sectors of society in which Spiritism found its greatest acceptance. At the same time, an increasing number of people on a lower socio-economic level has also acquired the educational and other social characteristics compatible with adherence to the doctrines of Allan Kardec. Candido Procópio Ferreira Camargo advances the thesis that Kardecism has the function of

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[42]Bertram Hutchinson, "Urban Social Mobility Rates in Brazil Related to Migration and Changing Occupational Structure," _América Latina_, Vol 6, no. 3 (July-September, 1963), pp. 47-61.

integrating individuals into modern industrial society.[43] He maintains

that São Paulo represents David Reisman's "other-directed" type of

society,[44] and that Spiritism provides for many an "inner-directedness"

without which they could not satisfactorily guide their own lives.

Although Camargo applies this thesis to both Kardecists and "low

Spiritists," it is particularly applicable, it seems to this writer, to

the lower class group. Their occupational status is more tenuous, and

they do not have the stake in, and the support of, the societal in-

stitutions that is likely to be enjoyed by those of higher status.

Occupation is a reliable indicator of educational level and socio-

economic status in Brazilian society, and the data in Table 10 illus-

trate the association of higher incidence of Spiritist membership with

the increased proportions of occupations that produce middle-class status.

In column one are given the percentages of persons in the eco-

nomically active population over ten years of age, in each of the

twelve occupational categories. In column two are presented the per-

centages of those Brazilians engaged in the "urban" occupations alone,

the ten categories being considered as a total. The respective occupa-

tional percentages of samples of Spiritists in São Paulo and Campinas

appear in columns three and four.[45] Some of the variations in the

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[43]Kardecismo e Umbanda, São Paulo: Livraria Pioneira Editôra,
1961, pp. 68-69.

[44]David Reisman, The Lonely Crowd, New York: Yale University
Press, 1950.

[45]The São Paulo sample consists of the 580 Spiritists interviewed
by Camargo and his assistants in the study referred to above. The Cam-
pinas sample is composed of 75 Spiritists interviewed by the writ... and

Table 10.--A Comparison of the Occupational Distribution of the Population Aged Ten Years and Over: Brazil as a Whole (1950), and Two Samples of the Spiritist Population (1960)

Occupation	Per cent total population	Per cent of portion in "urban occupations" only	Per cent of São Paulo sample N=580	Per cent of Campinas sample N=75
1. Agriculture, stock-raising, forestry	57.9	--	0.0	1.0
2. Extractive industries	2.8	--	0.0	0.0
3. Manufacturing, processing, construction	13.0	33.3	12.9	5.9
4. Wholesale and retail trade	5.6	14.3	18.7	7.4
5. Real estate, banking, credit and insurance	0.7	1.7	4.3	4.4
6. Domestic service	4.0	10.1	24.9*	8.8
7. Other services	5.9	15.0	6.8	14.5
8. Transportation, communication and storage	4.1	10.4	4.6	14.5
9. Liberal professions	0.5	1.2	1.7	7.2
10. Teaching, et cetera	2.5	6.5	5.5	16.1
11. Public administration, legislation, justice	1.5	3.8	12.8	11.7
12. National defense and public security	1.5	3.7	2.4	7.2
	100.0	100.0	94.8**	98.3***

*Includes housewives.

**5.2 retired and no answer.

***1.3 retired and no answer.

SOURCES: "Censo Demográfico," VI Recenseamento Geral do Brasil, 1950, Rio de Janeiro: Serviço Nacional de Recenseamento, 1956, Vol. I, pp. 34-35; T. Lynn Smith, Brazil: People and Institutions, Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1963, p. 91; C.P.F. Camargo, Kardecismo e Umbanda, São Paulo: Livraria Pioneira Editôra, 1961, pp. 165-166; questionnaires distributed by the writer.

percentages from one column to another are simply reflections of the differential incidence of given occupations in specific cities, and allowances have been made for this. For example, Campinas, a rail and bus center, has a high percentage of transportation workers. We consider briefly the information provided in the table.

Those employed in "manufacturing, processing, and construction," comprise one-third of the total of urban workers; large numbers of them are unskilled laborers. They are greatly under-represented among the Spiritists, in comparison with the population as a whole, and this is especially true in Campinas. Workers in commerce and public and private bureaucracies, the white-collar categories numbered 4, 5, and 11, have an unusually high representation among Spiritists; an exception to this is category number 5 in Campinas, which is not a commercial center and thus has relatively fewer such workers.

The "domestic service" percentage for São Paulo is inflated by the inclusion of housewives in this category; in the Campinas survey unemployed housewives were asked to give the occupation of the head of the family. In both cases, there appear to be about the same proportion of domestics among Spiritists as in the urban population as a whole. It is significant that these female servants are on the same occupational level as the male laborers who are so under-represented in Spiritist circles.

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assistants in 1965-66. All of these persons were interviewed while attending meetings of their centers; observation has indicated that they are generally representative, although there is possibly some under-representation in occupational category number 3, composed of skilled and unskilled laborers.

The functions of Campinas as a transportation center and as a focus of educational and cultural activities are reflected in its high employment ratings in the corresponding categories in the table. Even so, the proportions of the Spiritists of Campinas found in these two occupational sectors are substantially higher than those for the Spiritists of São Paulo and for the nation as a whole. These occupations, as well as the liberal professions and the police and military, have an unusually high representation among Spiritists, and this is greatly accentuated in the smaller cities. In a survey of professional people in twenty-seven small cities in the state of São Paulo, Camargo found relatively high proportions of Spiritists and those sympathetic to Spiritism (see Table 11).

Table 11. Three Professional Categories Considered in Relation to Spiritism

Profession	Number	Per cent
Pharmacists*	688	
Spiritists	37	5.4
Sympathizers	31	4.8
Dentists	908	
Spiritists	64	7.0
Sympathizers	40	4.4
Owners of Civil Registry Office	758	
Spiritists	51	7.2
Sympathizers	31	4.1

*Pharmacists enjoy a relatively higher status in Brazil than in the U.S.

SOURCE: Data in Candido P. F. Camargo, Kardecismo e Umbanda, São Paulo: Livraria Pioneira Editôra, 1961, p. 142.

While there are no comparative data on these professions for the metro-
politan centers, it is generally agreed that the proportions of
Spiritists in them would hardly be as high as these.

This is supported by the general observation that individuals of
middle-class occupational status are apt to be "joiners" and leaders on
a relatively larger scale in smaller localities than in large cities.
It is also consonant with the observation of the writer that large
proportions of the innovators and deviants from traditional norms in
Brazilian society are composed of the intellectually curious of the
upper middle classes, and of elements of the lowest classes. Among
the former are many candidates for Spiritism, while many of the latter
become Pentecostals or follow low spiritism.

The expansion of the industry, the urban centers, and the total popu-
lation has brought rapid growth in the ranks of technicians, white-
collar workers, and professional people. Spiritist recruitment has
continued to be heaviest in these occupational categories. In large
industrial centers, such as São Paulo, the extension of greater educa-
tional and occupational opportunities to more lower class people has also
made them more receptive to Spiritism. In contrast to this, places such
as Recife, with rapid growth in population but a relatively small
increase in productivity, have had a low rate of growth among Kardec
Spiritists. The appeal of Spiritism, and its growth, are more
pronounced among the better-educated in smaller cities, and among
younger industrial and bureaucratic workers in the very large centers.

This is partially attributed by some to the strains of urban life and the high cost of modern medical care.[46]

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[46]Cf. Camargo, op. cit., pp. 99-104.

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSION

In this conclusion we focus upon some of the major findings of this study; we also attempt to indicate some of the trends now under way, and to identify a few additional lines of investigation which our study suggests.

The Brazilian census of 1950 reported as Spiritists 824,553 persons, or 1.6 per cent of the total population. It is estimated that at present there are two to three million Brazilian Spiritists. They are heavily concentrated in the cities, especially in the states of Minas Gerais, Rio de Janeiro, Guanabara, São Paulo, and Rio Grande do Sul. The ratio of the sexes among Spiritists generally follows that of the population at large. The proportion of whites to colored is higher among Spiritists than in the total population. Most Spiritists are literate members of the middle and lower classes, and are generally found in the "white-collar" occupations and in teaching, small business, and the professions.

The Roman Catholic Church and, more important, "folk Catholicism" and the religious and superstitious beliefs of the Indians and African slaves contributed to the religious milieu in which Spiritist doctrines, seances, and cures might find ready acceptance. The presence of these various belief systems, together with the rationalist philosophies and the advent of Protestantism in the 19th century, made for the legitimizing of a plurality of religions in Brazil, where only Roman Catholicism had previously been recognized.

Spiritism is based upon teachings which a French pedagogue, Allan Kardec, believed he received from the spirits in the 1850's. The fundamental belief is in the perpetual existence of spirits, including our own, who through successive reincarnations are perfected in moral goodness. Thousands of Spiritist societies function in "centers," conducting séances, doctrinal studies, and charitable programs. These latter are of primary importance, and include many large institutions. This is a volunteer lay movement, in which each member receives recognition for his activity, whether as a spiritistic medium or a worker. These activities have been functional for members and for those whom they serve, in the rapid process of urban-industrial development in Brazil; they have aided in the adaptation of great numbers of people to modern urban life. In urban places, both large and small, Spiritism offers a religious option and an opportunity for social interaction and religious expression to "freethinkers" and other non-Catholics, as well as a "non-dogmatic" humanistic frame-work for the traditional conservative morality.

Certain trends are clearly observable in Spiritism today. A major one is toward further institutionalization through the unifying of municipal, state, and other federative bodies. At the same time, on the level of local societies there appears to be much ambivalence toward such unification. This gives evidence of being related to the widespread trend of increased emphasis upon sentimental piety, charity, and mysticism, in which local charismatic figures assume important roles. The very teachings of Allan Kardec are self-contradictory at this point; apparently unaware of the mechanisms of institutionalization, he wished for uniformity without "orthodoxy," and for concerted action with a minimum of organization. This poses problems for his followers.

Other, less clearly discernible trends are under way in the area of organization. Of principle importance among these is the relationship of Spiritism to Umbanda, the Afro-Brazilian cult of so-called "Christian white magic." This movement is numerically strongest among the lower classes in the same regions in which Spiritism has its greatest middle-class strength. Research is required to determine to what extent Spirit- ism has the flexibility to incorporate Umbandist practices into its healing rites, and to verify the proportions of Spiritists and Spiritist-sympathizers who may be turning to Umbanda. This latter movement and its institutions have yet to be investigated adequately.

It has been made apparent that Spiritism, possessing a rationalistic approach but a conservative ethic, presents an aspect of ambivalence with regard to the family. Having originated in Brazil as a household-group phenomenon, and encouraging the domestic virtues, it yet makes its "conversion" appeal on a rational, individualistic basis, and generally to adults. Interest and effective action on the part of Spiritists are slowly turning toward the family, to religious programs for youth and children, and to the general subject of education. It will therefore be of importance to study, not only those changes in themselves, but also their relationships to the growing organizational complexity and rigidity within the movement. On the other hand, the changes in the program with regard to the family and education should also be examined in the face of the growing demand -- referred to above in connection with Umbanda -- for immediatism and emotional dynamic in the cultus.

Although there is a fundamental break with Roman Catholicism on the question of reincarnation and eternal destiny, the major grounds of most persons for coming to Spiritism from the Catholic Church, and for

Spiritist polemics against it, have been those involved in the Catholic cultus, hierarchical authority, and degree of control over "non-religious conduct." In the wake of the Second Vatican Council, various changes in these areas of Roman Catholic life have ensued, and others appear to be in the offing. There is thus the possibility that Spiritists will be forced to make subtle changes in their stance, vis-a-vis the Roman Catholic Church.

Another major insitution, the services of which may profoundly affect Spiritist organization and cultic emphasis, is that of government. As public welfare increasingly becomes a matter of governmental attention, the Spiritist emphasis upon assistance to the needy will inevitably be affected, with results as yet unforseeable. Related to this subject, however, are equally knotty questions which concern the more esoteric teachings and practices of Spiritism. This doctrine is adhered to, as we have seen, by large numbers of persons with bureaucratic types of employment, including government functionaries. Increasing numbers of such persons entrust their destinies and their daily decisions to the orientation of entities which they believe to be wise and well-informed spirits. There are at present no data available on civilian government personnel and military men, as to religious preferences and activity. Nevertheless, a fruitful area of research might well be that concerning the degree to which Spiritist practices influence professional conduct. The identification of Spiritism, by many adherents, with the growing national consciousness in Brazil, may tend to reinforce the possibility of such influence. (It must be remembered here that what is involved, as far as the Spiritist is concerned, is not a vague "praying for guidance" to a supernatural being, though he may also pray, but a

normal process of consultation with natural beings, "the spirits.")

Such seeking for guidance is often referred to in "testimonials" of individuals who relate, in public meetings or in the Spiritist press, experiences of orientation received in business and personal affairs. Such questions as these have also come to the surface many times with relation to decisions of Spiritist medical and psychological practitioners, and it is to be expected that they will arise increasingly in those fields and that of education. In this study, we have had occasion to mention such a case with reference to literature.

This area of inquiry may become of ever greater importance if, as appears to be the case, Umbanda continues to invade the terrain of Spiritism through its emotional dynamic and the upward social mobility of its adherents. Umbanda gives a smaller amount of disinterested attention to moral-intellectual doctrinizing, and much more emphasis to practical solutions for questions of decision and action.

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Jarrett Parke Renshaw was born in Memphis, Tennessee, January 27, 1923, to Anderson N. and Grace P. Renshaw. He was graduated from the Whitehaven High School in 1939, and from Emory University in 1943, with the B.A. in Romance Languages. After several years as a Boy Scout Executive, he entered the ministry of the Methodist Church. He received the degree now known as Master of Divinity from Emory University in 1949, and, after two years as a pastor in South Georgia and a brief period of special training, went with his family as missionaries to Brazil.

He served in that country as a pastor, opening new fields of work in Maringá, Paraná and Campo Grande, Mato Grosso and surrounding rural areas. In 1961, he was appointed director of the Escola de Português e Orientação, a school for new missionaries in Campinas, near the city of São Paulo; he held this post -- with a year's break for a furlough -- until his coming to the University of Florida in 1966. Here he resumed the doctoral studies begun at Emory in 1962-63, serving as an assistant in the Center for Latin American Studies and as an NDEA and Graduate Fellow.

In 1946, he was married to Eunice Whiting, of Camilla, Georgia; they have four children: Kathleen, Jarrett, Suzannah, and Clay.

This thesis was prepared under the direction of the chairman of the candidate's supervisory committee and has been approved by all members of that committee. It was submitted to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and to the Graduate Council, and was approved as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

August, 1969

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Dean, College of Arts and Sciences

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Dean, Graduate School

Supervisory Committee:

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Chairman

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